

T H E  
**SACRED INTERPRETER:**  
 Or, A PRACTICAL  
**INTRODUCTION**  
 TOWARDS A  
 Beneficial **READING,**  
 AND A  
 Thorough **UNDERSTANDING**  
 OF THE  
**HOLY BIBLE.**

C O N T A I N I N G,

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| <p>I. A Faithful HISTORY of the Four Ancient Monarchies, (the <i>Assyrian</i>, <i>Persian</i>, <i>Grecian</i>, and <i>Roman</i>) absolutely necessary for the Knowledge of the Condition of the <i>Jewish</i> People.</p> <p>II. A General View of the State of the <i>Jewish</i> Church, to the Destruction of JERUSALEM.</p> <p>III. Remarks on the <i>Pentateuch</i>, and the Prophets in the <i>Old Testament</i>, and on the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles in the <i>New</i>;</p> | <p>shewing the Design and chief Scope of each Book.</p> <p>IV. An exact Chronology of the HOLY SCRIPTURES, taken from Archbishop <i>Ussher</i>, and Mr. Archdeacon <i>Eckard</i>.</p> <p>V. A Dissertation upon REVEALED RELIGION, and an Account of those Divines who have defended it.</p> <p>VI. Difficult Texts of SCRIPTURE explained; with a Recital of such SACRED MYSTERIES as ought not to be made the Subject of Human Enquiry.</p> |
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L I K E W I S E

The several Parts of the HOLY LAND are compared with the Accounts given thereof by Modern Travellers: The Whole designed to render the Study of the HOLY SCRIPTURES more Easy and Instructive.

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By *DAVID COLLYER*,  
 Late Vicar of *Great Coxwell, Berks.*

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The THIRD EDITION, Revised and Improved; with compleat Indexes.

V O L. II.

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*It appears by this Performance, that the Reverend Mr. Collyer spent his Time very wisely in his Country Living. This is a Work of general Use: Proper to be read by every Body, and should be in every House where there is a B I B L E. [See La Roche's Memoirs of Lit. 1726.]*

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T H E  
Sacred Interpreter.

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P A R T II.

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C H A P. I.

*Concerning the New Testament in general.*



THE Books of the New Testament were written by the Apostles, and other inspired Persons; who were stirred up, directed, and assisted by the Spirit of God, so to write as a Means to preserve the Doctrine of the Gospel to the World's End. Christ often promised the Apostles the Holy Ghost for their Guide, and this Promise he performed (*a*), when *they were all filled with the Holy Ghost*; of which he had told them, this was to be one Effect (*b*), *He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* Again (*c*), *He shall guide you into all truth.* And not only the Apostles, but many of them also who were afterwards converted, were

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filled

(*a*) *Acts* ii. 4. (*b*) *John* xiv. 26. (*c*) *John* xvi. 13.

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*filled with the Holy Ghost.* And if they had this Assistance and Guidance of the Holy Spirit as to what they said, much more as to what they wrote; for their Words were spoken to few, and might be forgotten, but their Writings are for the Use of all Christians, and still remain: So that they both taught the People then living, and wrote for the Instruction of the Church in After-Ages, by the special Providence of God, and the Assistance of the Divine Spirit; which both *refreshed their memories*, as to what they had *seen and heard* (d), and *revealed*, or suggested what they knew not before (e).

And though St. Paul was not among them when the Holy Spirit was sent down at first, yet, at his Conversion, he *was filled with the Holy Ghost* (f); and besides, he was caught up into Heaven, and had *abundance of revelations* (g). As to what he says (b), *To the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord*: This is not to be understood as if what the Apostle spake or wrote was according to his natural Reason, not of Divine Inspiration; but when he says, *I command, yet not I* (or according to the Original, *Command not I*) *but the Lord*; he might mean, that not only he so directed; but also it was founded on what Christ himself, whilst on the Earth, taught against Divorces (i). So *to the rest speak I, not the Lord*; that is, thus I give my Advice, not as a Commandment of the Lord, or although there is not any former express Scripture or Revelation of Christ concerning the Marriage of a Believer with an Infidel.

### C H A P.

(d) 1 John i. 3. (e) Eph. iii. 3, 5. (f) Acts ix. 17.  
1 Cor. xiv. 37. (g) 2 Cor. xii. 4, 7. see also 1 Cor. xi. 23.  
and xiv. 37. (b) 1 Cor. vii. 10. (i) Mat. xix. 9.



CHAP. II.

*Concerning the Four Gospels.*

THE first of these Books are the holy *Gospels*. The Word *Gospel* is derived from the *Saxon Godspel*, which signifies a good Word, or good Tidings ; because the Gospels contain the Account of our Lord Jesus Christ's coming into the World to save Mankind from eternal Wrath and Misery in Hell, and to make them capable of enjoying everlasting Happiness in Heaven. The Writers of the Gospel are called *Evangelists*, that is, they who give us the Account of those good Tidings. There are four of these Gospels, called, according to the Names of the Writers, *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, and *John*. *Matthew* and *John* were two of Christ's Disciples and Apostles. *Mark* was a Convert (*a*) to the Christian Faith, and a constant Attendant of St. *Peter* the Apostle (*b*). *Luke* was also a Convert to Christianity, and a Companion of St. *Paul* (*c*).

There might be indeed other Christian Writers, that were not Apostles, besides *Mark* and *Luke*, who lived in the Apostles Times ; and yet their Writings do not make a Part of the Scriptures, as the Gospels of St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* do, because these were (*d*) owned and approved by the Apostle St. *John*, and so received into the Canon of the Scripture : And however we may suppose, that some of the Apostles, whilst they planted the Gos-

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pel

(*a*) Euseb. Hist. Book ii. Chap. 15. Gr. c. 14.

(*b*) 1 Pet. v. 13. (*c*) Acts xvi. 10.

(*d*) Euseb. Ibid. Book iii. Ch. 24. Gr. c. 18. ἀλήθειαν αὐτοῖς ἐπιμαρτυρήσαντα.

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pel in remote Parts, might at first, for a present Occasion, write more Books or Gospels than are now extant (which yet cannot be known) yet it would not follow, but that those we now have, are sufficient to instruct us in all Points of Christian Faith and Practice : For all the Apostles and holy Writers were taught by the same Master Christ, and all enlightened by the same Holy Spirit ; and *St. John*, in the same Place where he acknowledges, that he had omitted the Relation of many Things which *Jesus did*, intimates, that what he wrote was sufficient to Salvation ; for that he had written the Things contained in his Gospel, that Men might believe that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing they might have life through him, or be saved (e)*. Lastly, the same good Providence, which, as is now supposed, might take care for the Writing of more Books, when more might be necessary, has likewise taken care for the Preservation of so many of those Books as are now sufficient.

Furthermore, concerning the Evangelists, it appears from the Ancients, that *St. Matthew* wrote his Gospel about eight, or between that and thirteen Years after Christ's Ascension (*f*), to correct some Mistakes, and to supply the Defects which were in those Accounts, that the first Christians, who were *Jewish* Converts, received concerning the Doctrine, Life and Death of Christ (*g*). Some  
few

(e) *John* xx. 30, 31. and xxi. 25.

(f) *Dr. Mill's Prolegom.* p. 7. supposes it later ; viz. in the Year of Christ 61. But see *Dr. Cave on St. Matthew, ex Epiphani. Hæres.* 51. and *Dr. Wells's Preface to St. Matthew.*

(g) Whether it was at first wrote in Hebrew, the Reader may consult *Dr. Mill's Prolegom.* p. 8. and *Cave on St. Matthew for the Affirmative*, and *Hottinger's Thesaurus, l. 2. c. 1. §. 5. for the Negative.*

few Years afterwards St. *Mark's* Gospel was written, according to what St. *Peter* taught, at the Request of the Christians at *Rome* (*b*), and was perused and ratified by St. *Peter*. It hath been supposed, that St. *Mark's* Gospel was for the most part an Abridgment, or short Account (*i*), of what is contained in St. *Matthew*: But by comparing them it appears (*k*), that *Mark* doth not always observe the same Order which is in St. *Matthew*; and that he gives a larger Account in some Particulars than *Matthew* doth, and that in some Points of great Moment, of which there are no Footsteps in the other. Soon after the Publishing of St. *Mark's* Gospel, St. *Luke* wrote to correct some mistaken Accounts which were published of Christ's Life and Death, amongst the Christians at *Alexandria* in *Egypt* (*l*). He has also mentioned what is omitted in the two former Evangelists, such as the Conception and Birth of *John* the Baptist, and of Christ himself, the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, his going up to the Passover at twelve Years of Age, and in other Instances. St. *John* (*m*), who outlived all the rest of the Apostles, and resided at *Ephesus*, having read the other Gospels, and approved them, made fundry Additions of what was wanting, at the Request of the *Asian* Bishops, especially concerning the Divine Nature

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of

(*b*) Irenæus, *l. 3. c. 1.* Dr. Cave on St. Mark, and Euseb. *l. 2. c. 15.*

(*i*) Dr. Mill, *ibid. p. 12.* and Dr. Wells's Preface to St. Mark.

(*k*) Euseb. *l. 2. c. 15.* Dr. Mill, *ibid. p. 12, 13.* and Dr. Wells, *ibid.*

(*l*) Dr. Mill's Prolegom. *p. 13.* and Du Pin's Canon. *Vol. II. Chap. 2. §. 5.*

(*m*) Euseb. Hist. *Book iii. Chap. 1.* Hieronym. Catalog. sub voce Johannes. Dr. Mill, *ibid. p. 21, 22, 23.* Du Pin, *ibid. §. 6.*



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of Christ, affirming that he was God, in Opposition to some heretical Deceivers of that Age. It is affirmed that this Gospel of St. *John* was written by him in *Asia*, when he was very old, at least threescore Years after Christ's Ascension (*n*).

These four Gospels thus confirmed (as well as one of them wrote) by St. *John*, whilst he was living, were received as the entire *Canon* (or Catalogue of Books) of the Gospel, by the Primitive Bishops and Pastors of the Church of *Asia* (*o*), where St. *John* resided; and afterwards from them by the Christians all the World over, as containing the Christian Doctrine; and therefore, wherever the first Successors of the Apostles afterwards planted any Christian Church, they took care to deliver to them these Books of the Divine Gospels, as the ancient Church Historian observes (*p*). So that we have a plain and distinct Account of the first Writing, Publishing, and Receiving the authentick Doctrine of our Redemption by Christ, contained in the holy Gospels.

### C H A P. III.

**F**OR the better understanding the holy Gospels, we may in the first place observe the following *General Remarks*.

*First Remark.* God was pleased to make several Discoveries from the Beginning, of the Messiah,

(*n*) Euseb. Hist. Book iii. Chap. 1. Hieronym. Catalog. sub voce Johannes. Dr. Mill, ibid. p. 21, 22, 23. Du Pin, ibid. §. 6.

(*o*) Dr. Mill's (ex Irenæo, l. 3. c. 11. fere ad finem) Prolegom. p. 23. See for the Sense of the Word Canon, or Canonical, Part i. Chap. 1. §. 8.

(*p*) Euseb. Hist. l. 3. c. 37.

fiash, or his Son's Appearance ; which were still the more clear, the nearer the Time approached, as it hath been briefly hinted in the former Part ; and which, by the way, shew the Nature of that Faith which was required in the Messiah under the Old Testament ; namely, according to the Nature of the Motives disposing one to have Faith in him ; that is, while they were darker, the Faith was more confus'd ; and more clear, as those became more particular and express. Immediately after the Fall, it was promised that he should be born of the *Seed* of the Woman (*a*). Somewhat above two thousand Years afterwards, God declared from what Nation or People he should proceed, and take our Nature ; viz. from the Offspring of *Abraham* (*b*). To *Jacob* (the Grandchild of *Abraham*) it was revealed of what particular Tribe he should come, viz. of *Judah*, and at what Time, before the *Scepter*, or Government should depart from the *Jews* (*c*). After that, *Moses* speaks of him as a great *Prophet* sent from God, and that all should hearken to him (*d*). Four hundred Years after *Moses*, he is shewn not only to proceed from the Tribe of *Judah*, but from what particular Branch of that Tribe ; viz. the House of *David* (*e*). *David* also himself was inspired to set forth Christ more plainly, as to his Death, by *piercing his hands and his feet* (*f*) ; His Resurrection, that God would *not suffer his holy one to see corruption* (*g*) ; His Ascension into Heaven (*h*), and sitting on the Right-hand of God (*i*). Afterwards, other Prophets foretold him more plainly ; as *Isaiab*, that he should be born of a

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Virgin,

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (a) <i>Gen.</i> iii. 15.    | (b) <i>Gen.</i> xxii. 18.    | (c) <i>Gen.</i> xlix. 10.  |
| (d) <i>Deut.</i> xviii. 15. | (e) 2 <i>Sam.</i> vii. 16.   | (f) <i>Psal.</i> xxii. 16. |
| (g) <i>Psal.</i> xvi. 10.)  | (h) <i>Psal.</i> lxviii. 18. | (i) <i>Psal.</i> cx. 1.    |

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Virgin (*k*), and suffer for us (*l*) ; *Micah*, that he should be born in *Bethlehem* (*m*) : But *Daniel* fixed the Time of his Coming ; viz. at the Expiration of *Seventy* (Prophetical) Weeks, or Seventy Times seven Years ; that is, four hundred and ninety Years (*n*). Now, since all that was foretold (either in a plain literal, or figurative Construction) concerning the Messiah, in all the different Characters of him (whether as a Prophet, Priest, or King) was exactly fulfilled in our Lord Jesus Christ, and in none else ; it follows, that he was the Messiah which was to come into the World ; and it is not unworthy of our Observation, that the *Jews* themselves, though they refuse to acknowledge him, are yet the most zealous Assertors of the Authority of those very Prophecies which bear Witness of him.

Farther, as Christ was foretold from Time to Time ; so the Primitive Fathers observe, divers eminent Persons under the Old Testament Dispensation represented him in several Particulars, as *Enoch* and *Elijah*, in his being carried up to Heaven ; *Noah*, as a Preacher of Righteousness ; *Melchisedeck*, as King of Peace, and Priest of the most high God ; *Abraham*, as the Father of the Faithful ; *Isaac*, as Heir of the Promise, and appointed for a Sacrifice ; *Jacob*, in wrestling with the Angel, and prevailing, as Christ doth with his Father, by his Intercession (and his Vision of the Ladder, that reached up to Heaven, prefigured Christ, by whom we may climb up into Heaven also). *Joseph* also represented Christ, in that he was sold into *Egypt*, and thrown into Prison, but wonderfully advanced,  
and

(*k*) *Isaiab* vii. 14. (*l*) Chap. liii. (*m*) Chap. v. 2.

(*n*) *Dan.* ix. 24, 25.



and thereby made the Instrument of preserving his Family ; as Christ was sold and betrayed by *Judas*, cast into the Prison of the Grave, but miraculously raised up, to be a Saviour to his Family the Church ; *Moses*, as a Prophet, a Lawgiver, and Deliverer ; *Joshua* (o), as giving Possession of the Promised Land ; *Sampson*, in overcoming the Enemies of the Church, and compleating the Victory by his Death ; *David*, in being both a King and a Prophet ; *Solomon*, as a Man of Peace, and in raising the Temple of God (which was a Figure of his Church) ; and lastly, *Jonah*, in being three Days and three Nights in the Whale's Belly ; thereby representing Christ's rising from the Dead the third Day : And however the Lives of these Persons were obnoxious to some Stains and Infirmities, yet that can no more hinder them from being Representatives of Christ, than the Spots on a Picture hinder it from containing the Delineation of the Person for whom it was drawn.

It hath been remarked before, that all immediate Revelation from God ceased after the Return from the *Babylonian* Captivity, and under the second Temple (except the *Bath-Kol*, or Voice aforementioned, if that were so) ; but the Time approaching for the Appearance of the Messiah, God was pleased to revive his former Way of Revelation, by an Angel to *Zacharias*, the Father of *John* the Baptist, who was the Forerunner of Christ ; and also to the Virgin *Mary* (p).

Second

(o) *Joshua* was a Type or Representation of Christ, in his Name as well as Office : Hence he is expressly called *Jesus*, Heb. iv. 8. scil. *Jehoshua* sive *Joshua*, & *Jesus* à verbo Heb. *Jashang*.

(p) *Luke* i.

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*Second Remark.* When the Time was accomplished that Christ should appear, there was a common and earnest Expectation (*q*) among the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Jews*, through great Part of the Eastern Country, of some great Prince who should *arise out of Judea, and obtain the universal dominion*. Hence the Wisemen, or Astronomers, among the *Gentiles*, who lived Eastward from *Judea*, having most probably heard of such an Expectation; and likewise observed a strange extraordinary Star, concluded, according to the common Notion (*r*) among the *Gentiles*, that it portended the Birth of such a great King; and therefore they went to *Jerusalem*, the Metropolis of *Judea*, to adore him (*s*), being directed to the Place where he was, by the same Star (probably by a Ray darted from the Star, or the Star appearing in the lower Region of the Air, and so low, as to point out the House). They might also have some Revelation concerning the Appearance of this Star, or at least be illuminated or incited by the Divine Spirit, as well as they were afterwards warned of God in a Dream not to return to *Herod* (*t*).

Farther,

(*q*) Suetonius, l. 2. in Augusto, c. 94. Tacit. Hist. l. 5. c. 13. *Pluribus persuasio inerat, antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore, ut valesceret oriens, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Et Suetonius, l. 8. in Vespasiano, c. 4. Percrebuerat oriente toto, vetus & constans opinio, esse in fatis ut eo tempore, Judæa profecti rerum potirentur. Upon which Casaubon remarks, that much the same Words being used by both the Historians, they recite the very Words of the Oracle.*

(*r*) Virg. Ecce Dionæi processit Cæsaris astrum, *vid. Grot. in Matt. ii. 2.*

(*s*) *Matth. ii.*

(*t*) *Verse 12. Chrysostom thought it some Invisible or Divine Power in the Shape of a Star, in Matt. ii. 1.*

## The SACRED INTERPRETER. II

Farther, from this general Expectancy it was that King *Herod* was so troubled at the Report of those Wisemen, and ordered the Slaughter of the Children in, and about *Bethlehem*, hoping to destroy him (u).

The Expectancy above-mentioned, of the Birth of some great King at that Time, might be in part occasioned by the Heathen (w) Oracles (as the Devils themselves were forced to acknowledge Christ to be the Son of God) (x), but chiefly by the *Jews*, being dispersed all over the East, and their having filled all that Part of the World with the Fame of what they then looked for; viz. the Appearance of the *Messiah* (y); since the Prophet *Daniel*, as hath been shewn, had foretold them the *Messiah* should appear, and they knew that the Time prefixed by that Prophet was then expired; and *Josephus* assures us, that this Expectancy of one that should be Emperor of the World (the *Messiah*) was at this Time so earnest, that it was one chief Cause of the *Jews* rebelling against the *Romans* (z). It was also the Cause of divers Impostors about that Time, who pretended to be the *Messiah* (a), and of so many *Jews* being seduced by them, which we do not find happened before this Age of the World; no doubt, because they  
appre-

(u) *Matt.* ii.

(w) According to what is above cited out of Tacitus and Suetonius.

(x) *Matt.* viii. 29.

(y) Concerning the Signification of the Term *Messiah*, see what has been said on the third Chapter of *Genesis*, Part 1.

(z) In his *Wars*, Book vii. Chap. 12. at the End, Gr. l. 6. c. 5. Ita & Suetonius, l. 8. c. 4 in *Vespas.* (post antea citata verba, esse in fatis ut eo tempore, *Judæa* prolecti rerum potirenter) id, de Imperatore Romano prædictum, *Judæi* ad se trahentes, rebellarunt.

(a) *Acts* v. 36, 37.



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apprehended the Time which *Daniel* prefixed, was not expired till then (*b*). It was upon the Account of this Expectancy that *Simeon* is said to be waiting for the Consolation of *Israel*, that is, the Coming of the Messiah (*c*). For the same Reason many *went out to John the Baptist*, when he published the kingdom of Heaven, that is, the Kingdom of the Messiah, *is at hand* (*d*): And when *John* had many Disciples and Followers, *the people mused in their hearts, whether he, Himself, was the Christ, the Messiah, or not* (*e*), whom they then expected; being taught by their Doctors, or Rabbies, so to understand the Prophet *Daniel* before-mentioned, and other Prophecies of him, as that he was even then to appear (*f*). And because it was the Custom (*g*) to strew Cloaths and Branches in the Way, in Honour of great Kings; and also, at the *Feast of Tabernacles*, to carry Branches, and sing *Hosannas* (the Sense of which Word is an Abbreviation of this Sentence, *save, or prosper, us, we pray*) therefore many of the *Jews*, supposing *Jesus* to be the expected Messiah, and that he proceeded from *David*, *spread their garments, and strewed branches, and cried, Hosannah!* that is, *save now, this, we pray, for the Son of David*, or, according to the *Jewish* Construction, *all prosperity be to the Son of David* (*h*).

But

(*b*) *Of these false Christs, see Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, Part iii. Chap. 10. and Dr. Whitby on Matt. xxiv. 5.*

(*c*) *Luke ii. 25, 38. (d) Matt. iii. (e) Luke iii. 15.*

(*f*) *See also Luke vii. 16, 17, 18, 19. John i. 41. and vi. 14, 15.*

(*g*) *Hammond in Matt. xxi. 8, 9.*

(*h*) *Matt. xxi. 8, 9. Hosannah pro Hosia, na. Read Casaubon exercit. 16. anni 34. Num. v. and consult Robertsoni Thesaurum, sub voce Jashang (יֵשׁוּעַ) p. 373. Like the Roman Acclamation, Patri Patriæ. Supple. Salutem precamur.*

But herein was their Mistake ; they expected he should appear as a temporal King, who should conquer the *Romans*, and obtain the Command of the whole World, and set them up to be the Lords thereof, under Him ; whereby they should enjoy Peace and Quiet, and all temporal Felicities and Delights, and that in their own Land ; being taught so to understand the Prophecies of the Messiah, in a literal Sense (*i*),

One of the ancient Christian Apologists gives this Account of their Mistake ; viz. that whereas two Advents of the Messiah were to be expected ; the first in a State of Humiliation, at his first Appearance in the World ; the second, by a Manifestation of Divine Glory and Power, at the last Day especially ; by not understanding the first, they fixed wholly on the second, imagining no other Appearance of Christ, but in Majesty and Splendor (*k*). And in this Sense it is said (*l*), *They thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear*. So also the Apostles themselves conceived, before they were more enlightened with the Divine Spirit ; and therefore they asked Christ when he was risen from the Dead, (*m*) *Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel ?*

(*i*) Such as *Dan. vii. 13, 14, 18, 27. To the Son of man was given dominion, and the saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever ; and to the same Purpose, Dan. ii. 44. Ezek. x. xvii. 25.* — *Josephus's Wars, Book 7. Chap. 12. at the End. Just. Martyr. Trypho. p. 90. edit. Jebb. 1719. Lightf. Hor. in Joh. vi. 31. Hieronym. in Mic. v. 8. and in Isa. vi. 1, &c. Maimon. de Pœnitentia, c. 9. § 4. p. 98. Edit. Oxon. & in Porta Mosis, p. 158, &c. Edit. Oxon. 1655. And their Posterity still expect it. Buxtorf. Synag. c. 50.*

(*k*) *Tertull. Apolog. c. 21.*

(*l*) *Luke xix. 11. (m) Acts i. 6.*

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*Israel?* According to this common Notion among the Jews, Cleophas said of Christ (n), *We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel*; that is, from their Subjection under the Romans, and should have made them Kings and Princes; whereas his *Kingdom*, or Regal Dignity and Power, was *not of this world*; viz. not such as they expected; neither was it to *come with Observation*, with that Royal Splendor and Grandeur as they pretended, so as to be rendered conspicuous in the Eye of the World, whereby Men might say one to another, *lo, it is here*, or *lo, it is there* (o): But Christ's Kingdom was a *spiritual* Kingdom on Earth, not to be established with Armies, but by a more Divine and Invisible Way, by his Word and Holy Spirit; yet so as that his Dominion and Power was far above all earthly Kings; viz. over Devils and evil Spirits, to cast them out, to cure Diseases, and to rule in the Hearts of Men, to subdue their Passions and Affections, to keep down the Power of Sin, to break through the Bars of the Grave, and to bring all his Subjects to an everlasting Kingdom in Heaven: But then, as for his outward Appearance, it was to be in much Humility and Meanness, and Suffering; he was to have no such outward *Form or Comeliness*, as they pretended, but was to be *despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief*, to be *wounded for our transgressions*, to be *led as a lamb to the slaughter*, and *as a sheep not to open his mouth*, and at length, to be *cut off out of the land of the living*, and to *pour out his soul unto death*, as the Prophet *Isaiab* (p), and others, had foretold of him.

The

(n) Luke xxiv. 21. (o) Luke xvii. 20. 21. (p) Chap. liii.



The ancient Rabbies of the *Jews* interpreted this Prophecy to be meant (*q*) of the Messiah; but in opposition to Jesus Christ, their latter Doctors have (*r*) invented two Messiahs; one the Son of *Joseph*, of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, who should suffer and die; the other the Son of *David*, of the Tribe of *Judah*, who should be prosperous and triumphant. But this is a meer Fiction; the Scriptures never mention any Messiah of the Tribe of *Ephraim*, but only one of the Tribe of *Judah*, or the Son of *David*.

Now, though Christ, in all respects, fulfilled the Prophecies, yet the Body of the *Jews*, through their Mistaken Expectancy of a temporal Prince, conceived a great Prejudice against him; because of the Meanness of his Birth and Condition upon Earth. The Thoughts that he was the Son of a Carpenter, and of a poor Woman called *Mary*, and of the despised Country of *Galilee*, where he most conversed, caused many to be *offended at him*, when they heard him speak of being their Messiah or *Christ, the Son of God*, and that he *came down from heaven* (*s*). This also offended them, that he spake of dying, when they expected their *Christ should abide for ever* (*t*). Hence the Multitude, who a little before, from an Admiration of his miraculous Works, supposing him to be the Messiah, and a conquering Prince, had cried their *Hosannahs* to him, and *spread their garments before Him*; at his being delivered up, cried out as loud, *Let him be crucified* (*u*).

Although

(*q*) Cartwright. Mellif. Hebraic. *Bishop Pearson* on the Creed, p. 87. and 182. Edit. 4th. Lond. 1676.

(*r*) *Bishop Pearson*, *ibid.* p. 183. More particularly Dr. Pocock's Appendix at the End of his Commentary on Malachi.

(*s*) Mark vi. 3. (*t*) John xii. 34. (*u*) Matt. xxvii. 22.

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Although there wanted not sufficient Evidences to convince them, if they would have attended to them; as the Holy Spirit's descending on Him, and a Voice from Heaven (*w*), declaring him to be the Son of God; the Testimony of *John* the Baptist, that he was *the Lamb of God*, the Christ (although *he knew him not*, that is, by Face or Conversation, till he was shewn to him by the Spirit,) (*x*) the heavenly Nature of his Doctrine, his casting out Devils, raising the Dead, and healing Diseases (insomuch that they owned, we *never saw it on this fashion* (*y*); which miraculous Works did evidently declare him to be the promised Messiah, who was to cure the Blind, and Deaf, and Lame, and Dumb (*z*), and did *bear witness of him, that the Father had sent him*, and set his Seal to the Truth of all that Christ said: (*a*) So that however their Law was at first settled under *Moses*, by Signs and Wonders from Heaven; yet a greater than *Moses* was here, to put an End to that Dispensation, and by a stronger Evidence establish one more perfect; for he had *done among them the works which no other man did* (*b*).

And what, though he spake of *dying*? Yet they knew that he also said, he should *rise again* (*c*). Therefore, though he did not appear in that splendid Manner, and with that earthly Pomp and Power as they expected, yet his Appearance was declared to be truly the Appearance of *the kingdom of heaven*, or the Kingdom of God, that is, the Kingdom of the Messiah, which they then looked for; and which *Daniel* had prophesied *the*  
God

(*w*) Matt. iii. 16. 17.      (*x*) John i. 33.  
 (*y*) Mark ii. 12.      (*z*) Isa. xxxv. 5, 6, 7.  
 (*a*) John v. 36, &c.      (*b*) John xv. 24.  
 (*c*) Matt. xxvii. 63.

*God of Heaven shall set up (d).* So (e) *John the Baptist*, the Forerunner of this great Lord Christ, prepared the People, and bid them *repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand*; that is, the Coming of Christ the Messiah is now approaching (as it was revealed to him, though he then did not know him personally) (f.)

And as for that other Prejudice they conceived against him, from the Place of his most constant Abode, viz. *Galilee*, which was so despicable in the Opinion of the *Jews*, that they affirmed, *out of Galilee ariseth no prophet*, and were surprized to hear that *Christ* should *come out of Galilee* (g): This proceeded from their gross Ignorance of the famous Prophecy, *Isa. ix.* from *Ver. 1.* to *8.* to understand which, we must remember, that the chiefest Part of *Galilee* was the Land or Lot of *Zabulon*, and *Naphtali*: Now the Inhabitants of that Country were the first who had the Misfortune to be carried Captive by the *Assyrians* (h); in (i) Recompence of which heavy Disadvantage, above the rest of their Brethren, *Isaiah* comforts them by his Prophecy, that they should have the first and chiefest Share of the Presence and Conversation of the Messiah which was to come; that People should *see a great light; upon them*, it should be said, *bath the light shined*; for (k) *unto us a child is born*, &c. which Prophecy is so interpreted, *Matt. iv. 12.* to *17.* Christ indeed (as the *Jews* said he should be) was born in *Bethlehem* of *Judea*, but he was by Habitation and Conversation

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(d) *Dan. ii. 44.*

(e) *Matt. iii. 2.*

(f) *John i. 31, 33.* See also *Matt. x. 7.* *Luke ix. 2.* and *Chap. x. 9, 11.* So in many of Christ's Parables.

(g) *John vii. 41, 52.*

(h) *2 Kings xv. 29.*

(i) *Mr. Mede, Book i. Disc. 25.*

(k) *Ver. 6.*



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tion a *Galiean* ; he was conceived and brought up in *Nazareth of Galilee* : When he began the solemn Publication of his Gospel, he chose *Capernaum in Galilee* for his Station ; his Disciples were *Men of Galilee* ; the Beginning of his Miracles was at *Cana of Galilee* ; and the greatest Part of his Miracles, which he did afterwards, was in that Country : In a Word, his ordinary Residence was in *Galilee*, though he came to *Judea* and *Jerusalem* at the Feast-times, when the whole Nation assembled there.

Farther, we may here remark, that those who received the glad Tidings published by Christ, were not generally the *Wise* and *Prudent*, who were possessed either with worldly Wisdom, or with a Conceit of their Knowledge above others, as the Scribes and Pharisees : To those the Gospel was not agreeable, both because not suited to their worldly Projects of laying up Treasures upon Earth, and also by reason of their Self-conceit, and their being taking up with their numerous Traditions, and vain Janglings ; but the *Babes* in Christ, the Humble and Modest, who having a low Esteem of their own Knowledge, were best qualified for the heavenly Wisdom, and so most ready to receive it ; and also the *poorer* Sort, whose mean Condition carried them the farthest off from the Expectancy of the Pleasures, Honours, or Riches of this World, and being inured to Poverty and Harships, became the less offended with the Doctrine of the Cross, and the better disposed to embrace the Promises of a better Life (*l*). Lastly, tho' Christ was to be a *Light*, and Saviour to the *Gentiles*, yet He was *not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (*m*), that is, in his own Person he was to appear only among them, but

(*l*) *Matt. xi. 5, 25.*

(*m*) *Mark vii. 26.*

but he commissioned his Apostles to publish Him to all the World (n).

*Third Remark.* For the more distinct understanding several Passages of the Holy Gospels, it is requisite to enquire into the State and present Condition of the *Jewish* People at the Time of our Saviour's Appearance among them, both in regard to their Civil and Ecclesiastical Affairs. And,

*First*, They being in Subjection to the *Romans* (o), had little or no Authority in themselves, but what was allowed them by the *Roman* Powers; who appointed *Procurators*, or *Governors* (p). These had the full Power of Judicature in *Judea*, but their chief Residence was at *Cæsarea* (on the Coast of the *Mediterranean*, or *Great Sea*). Such a one, in our Saviour's Time, was *Pontius Pilate*: At the same Time, by the Favour of the *Romans*, *Herod Antipas* (one of the Sons of *Herod the Great*) called the *Tetrarch*, had the Jurisdiction of *Galilee* (q).

*Secondly*, As for the *Jews* themselves, they were in some Measure allowed the Authority of the *Sanhedrim*, or *Great Council* at *Jerusalem*, which consisted of the Priests and Levites, and other Persons of Note and Learning among them (r), wherein the High-Priest bore a great Sway, but they had not the Power of Life and Death (s).

*Thirdly*, In Christ's Time the Laws of God given by *Moses* were much perverted and abused, by (t) false Glosses and Interpretations, especially by the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* (whom Christ particularly names, because the former were esteemed

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(n) *Matt.* xxviii. 19.

(p) *Ibid.* Chap. 22.

(r) *Ibid.* Chap. 14.

(t) *Grot. in Mat.* v. 20.

(o) See *Part I. Chap.* 21.

( ) *Ibid.* Chap. 21.

(i) *Ibid.* Chap. 22.

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the most Learned, as the latter the most Religious) for Instance: Because they found not any express Declarations to the contrary in the Law of *Moses*, they took little Care for the Government of the Mind and Heart (as appears from our Lord's asserting the Design of the Commandments, to extend to the inward as well as outward Guilt (*u*), in opposition to them) nor how they approved themselves before God in secret; so they did but carry themselves fair, in appearing to fulfil the Law: Whence our Lord instructed Men to exceed the Righteousness of such, by inward Purity of Heart (*x*). Again, it seems, some of them taught only a partial Obedience to the Commandments, as if there were no Danger in transgressing some of them: Whence Christ assures, *Whoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven* (*y*). They were also generally mistaken in being very punctual in performing the Externals of Religion, or the outward carnal Rites, relying wholly upon the very doing the Work, and esteeming a meer bodily Service as meritorious, by a bare Observance of the Letter of the Law, without attending to the inward and spiritual Righteousness (*z*), which was most acceptable to God: But Christ declared (*a*), *The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth*; which does not suppose, that God, under the Gospel, requires only a spiritual, and not an external Worship; for this last is according to the Ordinances of the Gospel, which appoints the  
holy

(*u*) *Matt. v. 21, &c.* (*x*) *Matt. v.* (*y*) *Matt. v. 19.*  
 (*z*) *The same which Justin Martyr laid to their Charge, Dial. cum Tryph. p. 44. Edit. Jebb. Lond. 1719.*  
 (*a*) *John iv. 23.*



holy Sacraments, Prayer, and Thanksgiving ; and encourages, by the Example of our Saviour and the Apostles, a worshipping with the proper and reverend Gestures of the Body, as Bowing or Falling down, Kneeling, &c. but the worshipping the Father *in spirit and in truth*, is to worship him, not in Types, and with the carnal Sacrifices under the Law (which were now to cease, and in the outward Performance of which the *Jews* chiefly confided) but according to the *Truth* of Things (*b*) which were only shadowed in the Law, but manifested in Christ ; and according to the *spiritual* Worship under the Gospel, that is, with a pure Heart, and by devout Prayers and Praises, and a holy Conversation. This appears to be the Meaning of this Passage, from the Occasion of Christ's mentioning it, in Answer to the *Samaritan* Woman's Question, concerning the true Place of the *Jewish* Worship, and their outward typical Sacrifices, whether at *Jerusalem*, or Mount *Gerizzim* (*c*).

Again, besides the written Laws, the *Jews*, especially the Pharisees (a great Sect among them) had *oral and unwritten Traditions* (*d*), that is, Interpretations of the Law, and many Customs, which they pretended *Moses* had not wrote down, but being instructed by God therein, taught by Word of Mouth ; and so they were conveyed first by *Joshua*, then by the Elders of the Sanhedrim or Council, and others, from Age to Age, down to their Time, as so many Fences of the Law ; such as Washing their Hands before Meat,

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Wash-

(*b*) Grot. in loc. and Mede, *Book i. Disc. 12.*

(*c*) See the first Part, Chap. 20. concerning this Mount *Gerizzim* in *Samaria*.

(*d*) Maimon Porta *Mosis. p. 5, 33, &c. & 35.* Hottinger. *Theaur. p. 560. l. 2. c. 3. §. 3.* Lightf. *Hor. in Matt. xv. 2. & in Mark viii. 12.* Grot. in *Matt. xv. 2.*

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Washing of Pots and Cups, &c. and this they were taught to do, not so much for Cleanliness, as upon the Score of Conscience and Religion; for fear of any Legal Defilement that might have happened to such Parts or Things: For they had taken up an Opinion, that any thing which was touched by a Person unclean by the Law, did communicate such an Uncleaness to their Bodies, and then to their Souls; but that this Ceremonial Washing did purify both Body and Soul; and therefore was pleasing to God. In the Performance of these and such like, they put most Confidence, and taught them to be *necessary and good in themselves*, and of *equal Force* with the written Law; nay, they esteemed such Traditions *above (e)* the Law, it being a Maxim amongst them, that *it is a greater Sin to act in Contradiction to the Words of the Scribes, than of the written Law; and that the former ought to be more attended to than the latter, the written Law being as the Body or Cloathing, but the unwritten as the Soul*; directly contrary to the Instructions of the old Prophets, who, on all Occasions, refer the People to the written *Law* of *Moses*. This Remark will explain a great Part of Christ's Sermon on the Mount *(f)*, and of his Discourses with the Scribes and Pharisees, who were much bent against him, for exposing their Hypocrisies and Corruption of the Law, and for preaching down their Traditions.

This Remark does also explain what our Saviour means by this *(g)*; *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*; not that all Commandments of Men, or of the Governors of the Church (in Things indifferent, and

*(e)* Hottinger and Lightf. *ibid.*

*(f)* Matt. v, vi, vii.

*(g)* Matt. xv. 9.

*The SACRED INTERPRETER.* 23

and tending to Decency, Order, and Edification in religious Worship) are here condemned: On the contrary, *St. Paul* enjoins such Orders to be observed (*b*); but such Commandments or *Traditions*, as our Lord is here speaking of (*i*), which the *Jewish* Scribes and Pharisees taught for *Doctrines*, imposing them as necessary, as if they were of equal Authority with God's Laws, and good in themselves, as we observed before the *Jews* esteemed their Traditions; and also whereby they *made the commandments of God of none Effect* (*k*).

By the two last Remarks, we also see how it came to pass, that, although Christ did so much Good, and fulfilled all Prophecies, and wrought so many wonderful Works; yet he was so hated by many of the *Jews*, especially the Scribes and Pharisees, and not owned as their Messiah; namely, because his outward Appearance was so mean, and yet he professed himself to be the Son of God; and because he was so free in laying open their Hypocrisies and Abuses of the Law, and Reliance on their Traditions: So that even Truth itself, because it was unacceptable, and against their Inclinations and former Persuasion, could not gain a Consent; but was stifled and overpowered by the prevailing Force of their Affections and Prejudice, which indisposed them for an equal Judgment of Things; insomuch, that they consulted to put *Lazarus* to Death, on whom Christ had shewn so signal a Miracle, by raising him from the Dead, in order to stifle the Belief in him (*l*); and at length became so obstinate and malicious, that they would rather attribute the most convin-

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cing

(*b*) 1 Cor. xiv. 26. and last Verse.

(*i*) Ver. 2.

(*k*) Ver. 5, 6.

(*l*) Job. xii.



## 24 *The SACRED INTERPRETER.*

cing Miracles to *the Prince of the Devils*, than the Power of God. So truly did the *Jews*, by hardening their Hearts, and shutting their Eyes, fulfil the Prophecy of *Isaiah* (*m*); and so much Reason had Christ to charge them with their Prejudice and Obstinacy (*n*), till they were abandoned by God, and given up to their own Hardness and Impenitency; which however make way for the Execution of what God had purposed, to save Mankind by the Death of Christ; in procuring which they would never have been instrumental, had they known and heartily believed in Him.

Farther, such was the Veneration they had for the Law and their Traditions, that it occasioned their Resolutions to put Christ to Death; for since there was then a general Expectancy of the Appearance of the Messiah, whom they fancied to be a temporal Prince, they were apprehensive that so many People following Christ, He should set up for such a one, and that might raise the Jealousy of the *Romans*, to whom they were in Subjection, and so far incense them, as to *come and take away their place and nation* (*o*), that is, destroy their Temple, with their Religion and Government, and bring them to perfect Slavery; to prevent which, they would put Christ to Death; which very Action brought that Judgment on them, as hath been seen before.

To what has hitherto been said, concerning the Cause of the Unbelief of the *Jews*, viz. their Misapprehensions of the Appearance of the Messiah, as if it were to be like a temporal Prince, and also their Veneration for their Law and Traditions; we may farther add their Prejudice against  
the

(*m*) *Chap.* vi 9, 10.

(*n*) *Matt.* xiii. 14, 15,

(*o*) *John* xi. 48.

the Doctrine of the Gospel, because it equalled them (who were the Posterity of *Abraham*, and God's peculiar People) with the other Nations and People of the World, as to their Title in God's Covenant and Promises (*p*). Against all these strong Prejudices, Christ opposes his miraculous Works, without which the unbelieving *Jews* would have been more excusable (*q*). *If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin; but now have they both seen and hated me and my Father.*

Fourthly, There were in Christ's Time, among the *Jews*, several Orders and Conditions, with divers Sects and Parties. Those whom they called *Gentiles* (*r*), were all the People of the World who were not *Jews*, or not of the Posterity of *Abraham*: These are also called *Greeks* (*s*). Those of the Gentiles who worshipped the God of *Israel*, were termed *Profelytes*.

A *Profelyte* (*t*), (which signifies one that came over (*u*), and adjoined himself to the *Jews*) was twofold, either a Profelyte of the *Covenant*, or else a Profelyte of the *Gate*.

A *Profelyte of the Covenant* was one, who being a Gentile, no *Jew* by Birth, yet, when instructed in the Law of *Moses*, took upon him the Sign of the Covenant by being circumcised, and also baptised before two Witnesses: Then he submitted  
to

(*p*) Of this see the Account given of the Acts of the Apostles, on Chap. x.

(*q*) *John* xv. 24.

(*r*) *Εθνη*, *Matt.* iv. 15.

(*s*) *Ελληνες*, *Acts* xiii. 17.

(*t*) *Calaubon. Exercit.* i. §. 3. *Num.* v. p. 24, 25, 26. *Mede, Book* i. *Disc.* 3. *Hottinger Thesaur.* l. i. c. i. §. 3. p. 16, &c. *Prideaux's Connect. Part.* II. *Book* v. sub Ann. 129.

(*u*) *Α προσηλυθῆναι.*

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to the whole Law, and so became a *Jew*, living and worshipping God as the *Jew* did, and differed nothing from a *Jew*, only he was not born so, but made a *Jew*, being esteemed by them as a *new-born Child* (x). While their Temple stood, such a Profelyte was received by the Offering of a Sacrifice (y), as well as by Circumcision and Baptism.

*A Profelyte of the Gate* was a *Gentile*, who inhabited within the *Gates of Israel*, or among the *Jews*; and having renounced Idolatry, worshipped the true God of *Israel*, yet was not circumcised, nor obliged to observe the Ceremonial Law, but only to keep the Seven Precepts of *Noah*; viz. (as the *Jews* reckoned them) To cast off Idols; To worship the One true God; To commit no Murder; Not to be defiled with Fornication; To avoid Rapine, Theft, and Robbery; To be careful in administering Justice; and lastly, To abstain from eating Blood (which have been spoken of before, concerning the State of Mankind after the Flood). Such a one was called a *Devout*, or *Worshipping Man* or *Woman* (z). This last Kind were esteemed *Gentiles*, and so called because of their Uncircumcision, and were according to the Law *unclean*, and such as no *Jew* might converse withal, nor were they properly Members of the *Jewish Church*; but they were admitted into the *Jewish Temple* and *Synagogues*, and to the Hopes of the Life to come, because they worshipped the true God only; yet, while the Temple stood, they were not suffered to come  
into

(x) Compare *John* iii. 5, 20.

(y) *Casaub. &c. ut supra.*

(z) *Acts* x. 2. and xvii. 14.



*The SACRED INTERPRETER.* 27

into the *Courts of Israel*, but into the outward Court, called the *Court of the Gentiles* (a).

*Tetrarchs*, as *Herod's Sons* were called, who governed after him, as hath been already shewn.

*Centurions*, or Officers over an hundred Soldiers.

*Publicans* (b), who were the Collectors, and sometimes Farmers or Renters of the Impositions or Taxes which the *Romans* exacted of the *Jews*: They were often grievous Oppressors; and therefore very odious to the *Jews*; especially if those Officers were *Jews* themselves, as sometimes they were; as *Matthew*, before his being called by Christ to be an Apostle, and *Zaccheus*. Besides, the *Jews*, of all People, were for Liberty, and abhorred all Subjection to any of another Nation; and since they took the Payment of Taxes for a Sign of Slavery, no wonder they should so detest the Collectors of them.

*Scribes* (c), whose Office was to copy out of the Book of the Law of *Moses*, and, being well versed therein, to explain the Meaning thereof; as also to interpret the *Jewish* Traditions: They are therefore sometimes called *Lawyers*.

*Rabbies*, Doctors, or Teachers.

*Pharisees*, the strictest Sect among the *Jews*, who appeared to be the most nice Observers of the Law of *Moses*, and of the Traditions of their Elders or Doctors: Accordingly, their Name was given them from *Pharas*, a Word which signifies to divide or separate from others: From the Opinion of their own Goodness, they despised all others besides their own Party, and therefore upbraided

(a) See the last mentioned Authors.

(b) Grot. & Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xv. 46.

(c) Hottinger's Thesaurus, l. 1. c. 2. p. 74. Lightf. Hor, in Matt. ii. 4.

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braided our Saviour, that He accompanied *with Publicans and Sinners*. By their Shew of Religion, they procured a great Esteem of themselves, and had a mighty Influence on the Government, and the People in general; insomuch that one of the *Maccabees*, by opposing them, *put himself and his Sons quite out of Credit with the common People*. But how religious soever they might be in their Way, they were not sincere, but were great Hypocrites; their Aim being *to be seen of men* (d). And they were very covetous, *engrossing the profits of the government*, proud and censorious (e). *Scribes and Pharisees* are often joined together in the Gospel; but the Scribes were of an Office, the Pharisees of a Sect; and both condemned by Christ for making their *Traditions* to be of equal Authority with the written Law, and for their Hypocrisy and Covetousness; and (f) for *making broad their Phylacteries*, that is, *Scripts* (g) of Parchment, which they wore on their Foreheads, on which were wrote some Sentences of the Law (the Word *Phylacteries* signifying Keepers or Preservers) and this they did, by mistaking the spiritual Sense of *Exod. xiii. 16.* that the Law shall be *for frontlets between thine eyes*, and understanding them literally, as serving to keep the Law in continual Memory. Now these *Phylacteries*, for the greater Ostentation and Shew, they made every *broad*, that they should be the more observed by the People; and to the same End also, *enlarged their Borders*, or *Fringes of their Garments*, which were appointed to

(d) *Matt. xiii.*

(e) *Joseph. Antiq. Book xviii. Chap. 2. and Book. xiii. Chap. 18. and Wars, Book i. Chap. 4. Pocock's Not. Miscell. ad Portam Moſis, p. 251, &c.*

(f) *Matt. xxiii. 5.*

(g) *Lightf. in Loc.*

to make People mindful of God's Commands (*b*).

*Sadducees*, who denied (*i*) any Interposition of God in Mens Actions, whether they did Good or Evil, but that they were left to themselves. They also denied a Future State, or Reward after this Life (*k*); which Errors it is believed they fell into from one *Sadock*, who mistaking the Words of his Master *Antigonus*, viz. that *Men should serve God, not as Mercenaries, for what they got by him, but for himself, without Expectation of Reward*, came to espouse those Errors (*l*). And as a Consequence thereof, they believed not the Immortality of the Soul, nor the Resurrection from the Dead, or that there were *angels or spirits* (*m*). *Josephus* (*n*) observes, there were not many of them, but that they were Persons of the higher Rank; however, that they were obliged to renounce their Principles, when they bore any publick Office, and to comply with the contrary Sentiments of the Pharisees; otherwise the People would not endure them.

Their Principles had bad Effects on them, for they were observed to be Men of *rough ill Manners* (*o*), even one towards another. *Josephus* remarks, that the “ *Pharisees had many Traditions* “ *handed down from the Fathers, which are not to* “ *be found among the Laws of Moses, and which* “ *are rejected by the Sadducees, upon a Persuasion* “ *that only the written Laws are authoritative and* “ *bind-*

(*b*) Num. xv. 38, 39.

(*i*) Somewhat like Pelagius. See *Joseph. Wars, Book ii. Chap. 7.* and compare *Grot. in Matt. xxii. 23.*

(*k*) *Joseph. Antiq. Book xvii. Chap. 2.*

(*l*) *Hottinger. Thesaur. l. i. c. 1. §. 5. p. 34. Lightf. Hor. in Matt. iii. 7.*

(*m*) *Acts xxiii. 3.*

(*n*) *Joseph. ibid.*

(*o*) *Joseph. in Wars, Book ii. Chap. 8.*



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“ *binding :*” He also adds, that “ *the Sadducees were supported by Men of Quality and Substance, the Pharisees only by the Favour of the Multitude (p).*”

*Herodians*, whom *Tertullian* and others of the Ancients affirm to be so called, because they believed *Herod* to be the Messiah ; but others rather esteem them to be a Party of the *Sadducees*, who adhered to *Herod* and his Family, and espoused their Interest and Grandeur (q). Hence *the leaven of the Sadducees*, in *Matt. xvi. 6.* is called in *Mark viii. 15.* *the leaven of Herod*. The particular Tenet is not expressed ; it might be a Compliance with the Civil Government, by breaking through the Commands of God ; as *Josephus* accused *Herod* himself, of doing many Things contrary to Law and Religion, to ingratiate himself with the Heathen Emperor (r)

*Zealots*. Of these see what is said in the former Part, concerning the Siege of *Jerusalem* by *Titus*.

*Essenes*, who began about the Time of the *Maccabees*, when the Persecutions of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, mentioned before, forced many *Jews* to retire to Woods and Desarts. They lived in a very abstemious Manner, and were very strict in some Duties of Religion ; and, in many Particulars, according to the Doctrines of Christianity ; But they could not be Christians, as some have fancied ; for living in Retirement for the most Part, we never read they had any Conversation with Christ or his Disciples ; and amidst the Accounts

(p) *Jos. Ant. lib. xiii. ch. 18.*

(q) *Ham. and Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xxii. 36. Dr. Prideaux's Connect. Part II. Book v. sub Ann. 250.*

(r) *Antiq. Book xv. Chap. 12. at the End.*

## The SACRED INTERPRETER. 31

counts given of this Sect (*s*), we find nothing of the Redemption of the World by Christ, nor of the Christian Sacraments; nor the Resurrection of the Body which they denied, though they owned a Future State either happy or miserable) and many of their peculiar Doctrines are condemned in the New Testament (*t*).

*Samaritans*, the Posterity of those *Assyrians*, who were sent to *Samaria* by *Salmanazer*, when the Kingdom of *Israel* was destroyed, as hath been said. These had, a long Time before Christ's Appearance in the World, renounced all their Pagan Idolatries (as it is believed, about 120 Years after the Settlement of the *Jews*, upon their Return from the *Babylonian* Captivity, by *Nebemiab*) and embraced the *Jewish* Religion (*u*); but they owned only the Pentateuch, or five Books of *Moses*, to be the holy Scriptures; and worshipped at Mount *Gerizzim* in *Samaria*, as the *Jews* did at *Jerusalem*; so that for three chief Causes, *viz.* their Proceeding from the strange Nations of the *Assyrians* before-mentioned; the Mixture at first of the *Jewish* and *Pagan* Religion together; and their Temple and Sacrifices at Mount *Gerizzim*, in opposition to those at *Jerusalem*; there arose, and still continued a great Hatred and Difference between the *Samaritans* and the *Jews* (*x*), insomuch, that the *Jews* thought they could not more reproach Christ, than by saying that he was a *Samaritan*, and (which they accounted came all to one) *had a devil* (*y*).

### Fourth

- (*t*) Joseph. Wars, Book ii Chap. 7. Antiq. Book xviii. Chap. 2.
- Hotting. Thesaur. l. i. c. 1. §. 1. p. 38, 39.
- (*u*) Prideaux's Connect. Part II. Book v.
- (*n*) See the former Part, Chap. 20.
- (*x*) John iv. 9.
- (*y*) John viii. 48.

*Fourth Remark.* Christ came not to *destroy*, or make void *the Law and the Prophets*, but to *fulfil* (z); that is, first, To make good in himself, what was signified and shadowed by many Parts of the Law of *Moses*; to give Substance instead of Shadows. Secondly, To make clearer Revelations of God's Love to Mankind, and *better promises* (a), not of temporal Blessings only, but of spiritual and eternal ones. For although some *had respect unto the recompence of the reward hereafter*, and looked for *a better country*, that is, *an heavenly Kingdom* (b); yet the Generality of the *Jews* attended more to the Rewards promised in this Life, such as Victory over their Enemies, a prosperous Condition, and such like; which, on the Performance of the Law, they were chiefly to expect (c). And although their Doctors taught a Resurrection and the State of Happiness after this Life; yet their Doctrines were loose, uncertain, and different from each other; some placing their Happiness in carnal Delights, and such Men as value this World; others in a more spiritual Enjoyment of God, and Knowledge of him (d). Thirdly, Christ came to fulfil the Law; that is, more fully to explain the grand Design of it, by shewing the Sublimity or Height of the Commands, according to their full Extent and Intention, and by setting forth the spiritual Import of them, together with those Rules and Precepts of inward Purity and holy Life, which he hath given

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(z) *Matt. v. 17.*(a) *Heb. viii. 6.*(b) *Heb. xi. 16, 6.*(c) *Deut. vi.*(d) *Alii in resurrectione, alii in diebus Messiae, alii in mundo futuro. See at large Maimon. Porta Mosis de fundamentis, p. 133, &c. and Pocock's Not. Misc. c. 6. particularly p. 90. ad 114.*



in the Gospel ; for one great Design of the Law was to make Men really virtuous and good, by worshipping the true God, and trusting in him, and by loving and doing good one to another. Hence, even in the Law itself, they are commanded *to love the Lord God with all their soul (e)*, and to *circumcise the foreskin of their hearts (f)*. So that the Law, at first, was like a Picture rudely drawn, with a Coal or Pencil ; but Christ's fulfilling the Law was like the Painter's finishing the Picture, filling it up, and drawing it to the Life.

Hence it appears, that the *Jews* themselves, though they pretended so much Zeal for the Law of *Moses*, yet by their Misinterpretations, and keeping to the Letter of the Law, so as not to attend to the Substance of what many of the *Levitical* Ordinances were but Shadows, nor to the spiritual Meaning of them ; I say, by this means, the *Jews* themselves destroyed the Law, as to the grand Design and Intent of it ; and Christ truly fulfilled, accomplished, and perfected it.

Thus much for Christ's *fulfilling the Law*. In the next Place, we are to observe what the Scripture saith of Christ's *fulfilling the Prophecies*, so often mentioned in the Gospel, as *Matt. i. 22. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Prophets, &c.* and in many other Places. Some observe (g), that the Particle *That* sometimes signifies not a Cause or End, but only a Consequence, and is of the same Signification, with *so that* ; and therefore they render the aforementioned Passage thus : By the doing of all this it fell out *so*, that an ancient Prophecy was fulfill-

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(e) *Deut. vi. 5.*

(f) *Deut. x. 16.*

(g) Hammond, &c. ex Grot.

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(g) Hammond, &c. ex Grot.



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ed; to strengthen which, it hath been farthermore observed, that all those Circumstances of Christ's Birth happened not, to the end such Prophecies should be fulfilled, but for the Salvation of Mankind. But to this it is replied (*b*), That there are several Ends or Causes of the same Thing set forth in different Places. So (*i*) one End of Christ's Suffering is said to be the *leaving us an example* of Meekness and Patience; but there were other more eminent Ends of Christ's Sufferings; *viz.* that he might *reconcile us unto God* (*k*). So (*l*) one End of Christ's being born of a Virgin, &c. was, *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophet.* Another, (*m*) to *save his people from their sins.* So that there seems no Necessity to depart from the plain Sense of the Expression, *That it might be fulfilled*; that is, such Things were done, to the end that such a Prophecy might be fulfilled; or, that it might appear that, by such Actions, Christ did most signally accomplish such a Prophecy, concerning the Messiah. Not but that some of the Prophecies mentioned to be fulfilled by Christ in the Gospel, might at first be understood in the primary and literal Sense, relating to the *Jews*; but the Holy Ghost teaches us, that they are also to be understood in a higher and mystical Sense, in respect to Christ the Messiah, as hath been observed before in the third general Remark on the Prophets.

It is objected against this plain Interpretation of the Words, *that it might be fulfilled*, from *John* xii. 38. where it is said, the *Jews* believed not in Christ, that the Saying of *Isaiab* might be fulfilled, *He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their*

(*b*) Grotius in Spanhemius in *Matt.* i. 22. and Whitby's Appendix to the Gospel of *St. Matthew*.

(*i*) *1 Pet.* ii. 21.

(*k*) *Eph.* ii. 16.

(*l*) In the forementioned Place, *Matt.* i. 22.

(*m*) *Ver.* 21.

*their hearts, &c.* It being improper to affirm, they believed not, that this Prediction might be verified: But then it is to be considered, first, That according to the Propriety of the *Jewish* Language, (often imitated in the New Testament) by an Action said to be done, is meant sometimes *a declaring*, or *permitting it to be done* (n); and then the Sense would be, they believed not, that the Saying of *Isaiab* might be declared or shewn fulfilled. Secondly, That the *Jews*, by their own Hardness of Heart, had provoked God to leave them to their Blindness and Infidelity, and to permit them to continue in it; and the Cause of this *Permission* at that Time was, that the Saying of *Isaiab* might be fulfilled, which was foretold, that such an Infidelity should happen in the Days of the Messiah. So that although the proper Cause of their Infidelity was their own Hardness of Heart (o), yet the final Cause of the Divine Permission of that Infidelity was, that the Saying of *Isaiab* might be fulfilled. From all which it follows, that although it may be granted in some Respects, Things were not effected merely for the Sake of such Prophecies; but that such Prophecies were uttered, because the Things were to be effected; yet since it was God's Decree, that such a Thing should come to pass, as our Redemption by Christ, notwithstanding he foresaw that the *Jews*, being left to their Infidelity, would be the more hardened therein; and since it was also his Pleasure, that Infidelity should be foretold by his Prophets; it was therefore done,

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that

(n) As hath been proved in *Part I. Chap. I. §. 9. Numb. xxi.*

(o) St. Augustinus, Tract. 53. in Johannem. Quidam inter se mussitant, quid fecerunt Judæi? vel quæ culpa eorum fuit, si necesse fuit ut sermo Isaïæ impleretur? quibus respondemus, Deum præscium futurorum, per prophetam prædixisse infidelitatem Judæorum: prædixisse tamen, non fecisse.

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that God might execute his Decree, which he had before declared by his Prophet (p).

*Fifth Remark.* Our Lord is often termed in the Gospel, *The Son of God*; and by St. John he is called, *The Word*.

The ancient *Jews* understood the Words (q), *I will declare the Decree, the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee*, to be meant of the Messiah, whom they expected (r); insomuch, that about our Saviour's Time, the Title of *the Son of God* was understood to belong to the Messiah or Christ, and therefore *Nathaniel* said unto *Jesus*, *Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Israel* (s); and *Martha*, *I believe thou art the Christ, the Son of God that should come into the world* (t). Now whatever Notion the *Jews* had of the Messiah being *the Son of God* (which seems to be obscure and uncertain about the Time of our Lord's Appearance in the World, when they dreamed so much of his being a temporal King) we can have no other Notion of the Terms *Father* and *Son* in the proper Sense, which it appears the *Jews* understood them in (u), but that they denote Persons of the same Nature; and however this Term *Son of God* be in general sometimes attributed to Creatures; as to *Adam*, and the *Angels*, in regard to their Original Being from God; and to the ancient *Jews* and *Christians* by Adoption; yet it is hard to give a just Reason, why

(p) See Grot. in Matt. i. 22.

(q) Psal. ii. 7.

(r) Grot. in Matt. xiv. 33. Cartwright. Mellific. Hebraic. l. i. c. 5. See also Psal. lxxxix. 26. 27.

(s) John i. 49.

(t) John xi. 27. See also Matt. xxvi. 63.

(u) John iii. 16, 17, 18. and v. 17, 18.



why the Scripture should stile the true God, as being emphatically *The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* (x), and also should stile Christ not only *The Son of God*, but *The only Begotten of the Father* (y), and *His own Son* (z), unless it were with the Design that we should apprehend by this Propriety and Singularity, that He so derived himself from the Father, as being a proper Son of God, of the same uncreated Essence with the Father (as the Terms *Father* and *Son* import among us) but in so transcendent a Manner, that we cannot conceive or define it. Indeed, in the Order of Nature, a Father, as being the Begetter or Producer, is to be supposed to have a Being first or prior to the Son begotten or produced; and yet the Son of God is equally infinite with the Father; for in this Argument we have nothing to do with the *ordinary Course of Nature*: The Essence which God always had without Beginning, without Beginning he did communicate, being as well always *Father*, as always *God*; of which we have a faint Resemblance in the Sun, which is the Producer of Heat and Light, and yet its Heat and Light is as ancient as itself, nor can one conceive a Moment in which the Sun was without them, though we cannot account for it; no more can we comprehend how God should have his Being from himself, or from all Eternity; and yet that is not less true.

Farthermore, St. *John* calls Christ *The Word* (a), *In the beginning was the Word*, even then subsisting (b), or in Being; and *the Word was with*

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God,

(x) *Colos.* i. 3.

(y) *John* i. 14. and *Chap.* iii. 16.

(z) *Rom.* viii. 32.

(a) *John* i. 2, 3

(b) Grot. in Loc. jam tum erat. Therefore he did not then begin to be.

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God, as the second Person may be said to be with the first, or the Son with the Father; *and the Word was God*; in which last Sentence the Term God must be understood in the same Sense, as it was in the former *with God*, to signify him who is truly and properly God as to his Essence (c); or else the Apostle must be supposed to leave Christians liable to a great and dangerous Mistake, by reason of the doubtful Meaning of his Words, which ought not to be charged upon him, or rather the Holy Ghost. It follows, *The same was in the beginning with God. All Things were made by Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made.* Now hereby St. John shews, that the same who made, did also redeem the World: For the Jews understood that Divine Being, by whom the World was created, by the Term *The Word* (d); Moses having wrote (e), *God said, Let there be Light, and there was Light*, and so on of the rest of the Creation. Hence the Psalmist, *By the word of God the heavens were made* (f), which St.

(c) *The Want of the Article, in John i. 1. is no Objection; for as Θεός expresses the Father without an Article, John i. 6. so ὁ Θεός with an Article expresses the Son, Matt. i. 23. See Bishop Pearson on the second Article of the Creed, and Dr. Waterland's Defence.*

(d) *A. the Chaldee Paraphrase; see Grot. in John i. 1. & De verit. Rel. Christianæ, l. 5. §. 21. Ham. in Luc. 1. Note 6. Bishop Pearson on the Creed. Artic. II. His only Son, p. 117. Edit. 4. Lond. 1676. And although Dr. Lightf. (Hor. in John i. 1.) observes that the Chaldee Mimra (the Word) does sometimes signify only ego, tu, & ipse; and is applied to Men; yet the two last Instances given by Bishop Pearson, shew plainly the Application thereof only to God; as Gen. i. 17. God created Man, is rendered, The Word of the Lord created Man; and Gen. iii. 8. They heard the Voice of the Lord God is rendered, They heard the Voice of the Word of the Lord God. Compare another Writer's Observation to the same Purpose (who must be allowed sufficiently conversant in the Jewish Rabbinical Learning) Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah, Part III. Chap. 5.*

(e) *Gen. i. 3.*

(f) *Psal. xxxiii. 6.*

St. Peter imitated (g); *By the word of God the heavens were of old*. It seems also, that this Term *λογος*, or the *Word*, in this Sense, was gotten very early among the Heathen (probably, by Tradition from the Jews dispersed among them) whereby they expressed the Power of God in making the World (h): So that both Jews and Gentiles were in St. John's Time well acquainted with the Expression, and easily comprehended the Meaning of it. By this it seems plain, that since He that *made*, or *built*, *all things is God* (i), St. John intended to be understood so, as to shew that Jesus Christ, the Redeemer, being that *Word*, by whom all things were made, could not be himself a Creature, but had a Subsistence with the Father in the Beginning, and was himself, together with the Father, One true eternal God (k). And this Interpretation of St. John's Word, in the Gospel, is farther confirmed by St. John himself (l): Where he describes the absolute Eternity of the Son of God in the same Words, as that of the Father is, *I am the first and the last* (m). It is manifest, that St. John brings in Christ so speaking, because he adds, *I am he that liveth and was dead*. Now Isaiah brings in the Father thus speaking (n), *Thus saith the Lord, the king of Israel, and his redeemer the Lord of hosts, I am the first, and I*

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am

(g) 2 Pet. iii. 5.

(h) Grot in John i. Ham. in Luke i. Note 6.

(i) Gen. i. 1. Heb. iii. 4.

(k) Compare Rev. xix. 13. and also Heb. i. 10, to 13. where the Apostle applies to Christ what the Psalmist had said of *Jehovah*, the God of *Israel*, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, Psal. cii. 25, &c.

(l) See at large Dr. Waterland's Defence of Queries.

(m) Rev. i. 17.

(n) Isa. xli. 4, and xliv. 6.



*am the last, and besides me there is no God. To this we may add the Words of Irenæus, who was trained up under Polycarp, St. John's Disciple, Neither the Lord, nor the Holy Spirit, nor the Apostle would have called Him, who was not God, by the name of God, at any time, if he had not been truly God (o).*

This Doctrine we are the more confirmed in, by Christ's appointing to *baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, (p).* Now, whether we understand the Words *in the Name*, on the Minister's Part, to signify, *by the authority and commission of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost*; or, that by the Persons being baptized *in, or into their Name*, is signified, *his profession of faith in all Three*, and his being as it were *listed under, and dedicated to their service*; it is plain, that hereby Christ sets every Person in an Equality, without any the least Note of Distinction (more than that of a *personal* Relation) and that in the Case of entering one into Covenant with the true God, in opposition to the Heathen Gods, and of placing a Sinner in a State of Reconciliation with God, and eternal Salvation; which can only be offered and assured to Men, in the Name of the Great and Eternal God.

Here it may be proper to explain to the common Reader the Sense of the Christian Church in two Respects; *1st*, Concerning the three *Persons* in the Godhead; *2dly*, Of Christ's being said to be God of the *Substance* of the Father.

As for the *1st*, By a *Person* is not meant such a Being as we commonly understand by that Word; *viz.* a compleat intelligent Being, distinct from every

(o) Irenæus, l. 3. c. 6. ad initium.

(p) Matt. xxviii. 19.

every other Being; but thus those three, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost* are in Scripture spoken of with as much Distinction from one another, as we use to speak of three several Persons, and yet they having equal Attributes and Perfections ascribed to them, are understood to partake of one and the same Nature. So that the Church asserts three Persons on the Account of Divine Revelation, but in such a Manner as to be agreeable to the Divine Nature; which being infinite, is not, like our finite Nature, capable of Multiplication, Separation, or Division. These three Persons are distinguished in Scripture by their personal Properties; viz. either those which are *internal*, as having Relation to each other; so it is the Property of the *Father* to beget the Son, of the *Son* to be begotten of the Father, and of the *Holy Ghost* to proceed from the Father and the Son: They are also distinguished by those Properties which are *external*, as having Relation to the Creatures, especially to the Members of the Church; so the Creation of the World is in Scripture more particularly ascribed to the *Father*, the Redemption to the *Son*, and the Sanctification of God's People to the *Holy Ghost*.

2dly, As for Christ's being said to be *God of the Substance of the Father*, it is not to be understood as if God the Father were supposed to be endued with any bodily Substance, such as goes under that Name in Things on Earth; for He is a Spirit; or that the Divine Nature is capable of Division or Separation, as bodily Substances are; and therefore in this Case, there is no Reasoning from bodily and sensible Things. And although Christ was made *Man of the Substance of his Mother*,

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*ther*, as Children are of their Mother's Substance, or a Branch is of the Substance of a Tree, &c. yet we are not to conceive so of the Divine Nature; and therefore, when it is said that the Son is begotten or derived, it is not to be understood that he is of a distinct *Substance*, or is a distinct Being, but a distinct *Person*. The Word *Consubstantiality*, as to Christ, is a Term taken up by the Church in opposition to Hereticks, chiefly *Sabellius* and *Arius*; the former of which, about the Year 260, pretended that there was no Difference between the Persons in the Trinity, but that they were all one Person under three Names; and *Arius*, about the Year 306, would understand Christ to be only a Creature, and to have had a Beginning, denying his Divinity, yet acknowledging him, by reason of his Excellency, to be styled *God* in Scripture. And because those Hereticks and their Followers made use of several evasive and coined Expressions, and sheltered themselves under ambiguous Terms, the Fathers of the *Nicene Council* fixed on the Term *Substance*, and *Consubstantial*, (or, of the same Being) which was not a Term then newly used, but had been applied to the same Purpose before, and was esteemed most fully to preserve the Order and Distinction of the Persons, Father and Son in the Holy Trinity, together with the essential Divinity of the Son, without destroying the Unity; as signifying the Son's being not a *Creature*, or only God by *Name*; but as partaking of the Divine Nature, and enjoying all the essential Perfections of the Father in common with Him, as it is set forth in the Holy Scripture; so as that the Son be acknowledged as one and the same God, together with the Father (*p*):



Father (*p*): But the *Manner* being not revealed, and unconceivable to us, the Church hath not determined it.

To conclude this Account of Christ's being stiled *The Son of God*, and *the Word* in the Holy Gospel; we find that to Him, as to the Father, are ascribed the same Titles of *Lord* and *God*, the same high Powers, Attributes, and Perfections; and also the same Adoration, Honour, and Worship; and yet in the Scripture it is also constantly asserted, that there is but *one God*, or, that *God is one*; and therefore, by the Scripture, the Father and the Son, with the Holy Ghost, are in Essence or Being that *one God*. But we are not to expect, that, searching into *the deep Things of God*, our finite Reason and Understanding should ever be able to comprehend (at least on Earth) His infinite Nature, not only in respect to the Trinity, but in many other Regards besides; as how God is eternal, without any Beginning; how he foreknows future Contingencies (that is, *Things to come*, which depend on uncertain Causes, and the Actings of free Agents, &c.) or, in respect to other Articles of our Creed. We find in Scripture the Doctrine of the Resurrection of *the Body*; by which we understand that our Bodies, however decayed in the Earth, shall be raised again, and united to our Souls; but after what manner, we understand not: All which yet we profess to believe. So that in respect to these *Matters*, which are and will be *Mysteries*, without farther Revelation, "We believe as we conceive, not distinctly  
" and

(*p*) Socrates, Hist. Eccles. l. 1. c. 5, 6, 7, 8. & l. 3. c. 25. Theodor. l. 4. c. 2. Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Artic. 11. His only Son, p. 135, 137. Edit. 4<sup>th</sup> ad marginem; & Bull Defensio fid. Nic. c. 1.

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“ and particularly, but generally, as our Ideas or  
 “ Conceptions are ; and we must be content with  
 “ such imperfect Knowledge, and assent as far as  
 “ our Conceptions go ; believing in part, what  
 “ is revealed in part, or what we now only *see*  
 “ *as through a glass darkly*, and can only *know in*  
 “ *part*. But it is unreasonable to deny our Assent  
 “ to the Truth of any thing, or the Reality of  
 “ its Existence, only because the Manner of its  
 “ existing is unknown to us.” Lastly, seeing  
 the Church of Christ in the next Ages to the in-  
 spired Writers, as well as for so many Ages since,  
 to this Time, hath understood the Scriptures in  
 the Sense above-mentioned, it is certainly our Duty,  
 and safest for us, to acquiesce therein ; though we  
 cannot account for the manner, in a Point con-  
 fessedly above our Comprehension ; adoring God  
 for his unspeakable Goodness, who *so loved the*  
*world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that who-*  
*soever believeth in him, should not perish, but have*  
*everlasting life.*

*Sixth Remark.* The Reason why our Lord  
 calls himself *the Son of Man*, seems to be chiefly  
 in reference to that famous Prophecy (*q*), which  
 the *Jews* themselves understood concerning the  
 Messiah and his Kingdom (*r*): *I saw in the Night*  
*visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came*  
*with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient*  
*of days ; and there was given him dominion, glory,*  
*and a kingdom.* Hence our Lord takes on him  
 the same Title, as being the true Messiah (*s*),  
*The Son of Man shall come in the Glory of the*  
*Father ;*

(*q*) Mede, *Book iv. Epistle xv.*

(*r*) Cartwright. Mellific. Hebraic. Dan. vii. 13.

(*s*) Matt. xvi. 27.

Father ; and (t), *Then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.* And (u), *As the Father hath life in himself ; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself ; and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man (x).* Hereby Christ declared, that how lowly soever he now appeared, and had not where to lay his Head ; yet he was the same which *Daniel* prophesied should one Day appear so gloriously. The Reason why in this Prophecy Christ is called *The Son of Man*, may be, because he was therein foretold to receive the Kingdom, not barely as God, coeternal with the Father ; but as being the Messiah, who was to take upon him the Nature of Man.

The calling *Ezekiel* so often *Son of Man*, was upon some other Account, probably to keep him humble, and prevent his being too much exalted with the many heavenly Visions which he saw.

*Seventh Remark.* There was great Reason why the Messiah or Saviour should be the Son of God, and also should take upon him the Nature of Man, viz. that the Divine Justice might be satisfied, and Honour vindicated ; for, though God designed Man's Redemption out of his Love and Goodness, yet it was requisite that Consideration should be had to his Honour and Justice, which was done by the Sufferings of Christ, being God as well as Man ; the Excellency and Dignity of his Person raising the Value and Merit of his Sufferings. Thus much plainly appears from *Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26.* *Being justified freely by his grace* (as to the Motive of it) *through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ* (as to the

(t) *Luke xxi. 27*      (u) *John v. 26, 27.*  
(x) Compare *Rev. xiv. 14.*



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the meritorious Cause) *whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, that He might be just* (to do nothing inconsistent with his own Divine Justice) in remitting Sins past; inasmuch as Christ has made Satisfaction for them, by his most precious Blood. It is not for us to say, by what other Method God might have been reconciled unto us; we are to adore, and walk worthy of His abundant Love, in sending his Son to be our Redeemer. Again, the *Honour* of God was vindicated by the Obedience of Christ, who fulfilled all Righteousness; especially since he suffered and performed the Obedience in the same Nature of Man, which had by Sin offended God's Justice, and broken his Laws (y).

*Eighth Remark.* Christ, or the Messiah, as he was Man, was to proceed out of the House of David: For God promised David, *Thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever* (z). Accordingly, *Isaiah* foretold, *Hear ye now, O House of David, &c. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, &c.* God indeed bad *Abaz* *Ask a sign, but Abaz said, I will not ask*; and then follows the Promise, not to *Abaz* alone, but *the whole house of David* (a).

Here by the way, we learn a proper Answer to the Objection of the *Jews* against this Prophecy of the Messiah, which being uttered so many Ages before Christ's Birth, they think could not be a  
Sign

(y) *This Matter is thus explained by Irenæus, l. 3. c. 20. Harere itaque fecit, & adunivit, quemadmodum prædiximus, hominem Deo. Si enim Homo vicisset inimicum hominis, non justè victus esset inimicus: rursus autem, nisi Deus donasset salutem, non firmiter haberemus eam, &c. vid. (in Not. Græbij ad loc.) textum Græc.*

(z) *2 Sam. vii. 16.*

(a) *Isa. vii. 10, &c.*

Sign to *Abaz* at that Time: Forasmuch as the Promise of the Messiah was a Security to *the house of David*, under that their present Danger of an Invasion by the Kings of *Syria* and *Samaria*, that they should not be extinguished, but that the Messiah, of the Seed of *David*, was one Day to appear, and establish his Throne.

Farthermore, *Jeremiah* prophesied; *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch (b)*. It is said, indeed, that some of the *Herodians* (a Spawn of the *Sadducees (c)*), who adhered to *Herod the Great*) pretended that *Herod* (who was no Jew, much less of *David's* Posterity) whom the *Romans* had made King of the *Jews*, was the Messiah (*d*); and afterwards, *Josephus* would have *Vespasian* the Roman Emperor (*e*) to be the expected Prince or Messiah. But as the *Herodians* pretended, in Flattery to *Herod*, so *Josephus* sought the Favour of the *Romans*, and was kindly used by them, and he believed God had forsaken his own Countrymen the *Jews*; so that it is not strange he should interpret Oracles in favour of *Vespasian*, then Emperor of so great a Part of the World, and Conqueror of the *Jewish* Nation. But the Generality of the *Jews* always expected the Messiah to proceed from King *David (f)*; and there was none so usual and proper Name, which their Rabbies were wont to call him by, as *Ben David*, or the Son of *David*. Hence the blind Men besought Christ, *Thou Son of David, have mercy on us (g)*. And when the People saw the

Mira-

(b) *Jer.* xxiii. 5.

(c) *Ham. & Lightf. Hor.* in *Matt.* xxii. 16.

(d) *Grot. & Ham. ibid.*

(e) *Joseph. Wars, Book vii. Chap. 12.*

(f) *Light. Hor.* in *Mat.* i. 1.

(g) *Matt.* ix. 27.

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Miracles that he wrought, they said, *Is not this the Son of David?* That is, the Messiah whom we expect (*b*). And therefore we are to suppose, that the Virgin Mary was of the Family of David, as well as Joseph; that Christ might be raised from the loins of David (*i*).

And thus much appears from the Angel's Words to her (*k*), *Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son-----He shall be great, and the Lord shall give unto him the throne of his Father David.* She therefore, who conceived this Son, must be of the House of David; since Joseph was only his supposed Father. And otherwise she could not have gone to Bethlehem, the City of David, to be taxed or enrolled (*l*), but must have gone to another Place; for it is said (*m*), that *all went to be taxed, every one to his own city*, that is, where their Ancestors were born, that their Names, Family, Dignity, and Condition might be recorded or registered.

Although the Emperor hereby might design only to enquire into the Strength and Riches of his Dominions; yet the admirable Providence of God is here to be observed, in bringing it to pass, that this Taxing or Enrolment should be made at that very Time, when the Virgin Mary was to be delivered; that she, living at Nazareth, might be obliged to go (above sixty Miles) to Bethlehem, where Christ should be born, according as it was foretold (*n*). This ancient Prophecy, of the Place of the Birth of the Messiah, was so well understood in Christ's Time, that when Herod demanded of the Chief Priests and Scribes, *where Christ should be born*, they readily answered, *in Bethlehem*

(*b*) Matt. xii. 23.    (*i*) Acts ii. 30.    (*k*) Luke i. 31, 32.  
 (*l*) Luke ii. 5.    (*m*) Ver. 3.    (*n*) Mic. v. 2.



*lehem of Judea (o)*. But what then did the *Jews* mean, when they affirmed it as a common and undoubted Maxim (*p*). *When Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is*: They did not dispute, but that he should at first appear to come from *Bethlehem*; but they had a (*q*) Tradition that he should presently hide himself for a Time, and then appear again, as from an unknown Place (*r*). Another Instance of the Divine Providence in the aforementioned Taxing or Enrollment, in respect to Christ, is, that the publick Records of that Enrollment, which expressed the Children as well as others, should give Testimony both to the Place of his Birth and his Family (*s*).

The Evangelists (*t*) deduce the Genealogy of Christ from *Joseph*, his reputed Father, that so they might thereby shew that even in that respect, he belonged to the Tribe of *Judah*, and the Family of *David*; otherwise the *Jews* might have objected against his Pretences of being the Messiah, for they apprehended no other to be his Father besides *Joseph* (*u*). Again, there is another Reason why the Genealogy of Christ should be deduced from *Joseph*, though he was only his reputed Father; because of that Rule among the *Jews*, *the Family on the Mother's side is not to be called a Family* (*x*); for both these Reasons, it was

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necessary

(*o*) Matt. ii. 4, 5. (*p*) John vii. 27.

(*q*) Lightf. Hor. in John vii. 27.

(*r*) Hence Trypho the Jew argued, that if the Messiah was come, he was unknown; nay, that he did not know himself to be such a one, nor had any Power till Elias came and anointed Him and made him manifest. J. Martyr, Dialog. cum Tryphone Edit. Jebb. p. 29.

(*s*) Grot. in Luc. ii. 5.

(*t*) Matt. i. 16. Luke iii. 23.

(*u*) John vi. 42.

(*x*) Lightf. Hor. in Matt. i. 16.

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necessary to shew, that *Joseph*, the supposed Father of Christ, was of the Tribe of *Judah*, and the Family of *David*, from which Tribe and Family the Messiah was to come; the Reason why Christ is said to be *the Son of David*, *the Son of Abraham* (y), that is, of their Posterity, without mentioning any between them, is, because of God's particular Covenant with, and promise to these two, that the Messiah (*viz.* as Man) should proceed from them (z), the mentioning this was most suitable to the Notions of the *Jews*, and their Expectancy of the Messiah, that he should come of the Family of *David*, whose Ancestor was *Abraham*.

The Difficulties (a) in reconciling the Genealogy in *Matt.* i. with that in *Luke* iii. are not easy to be cleared at this Distance of Time, the Tables of the *Jewish* Pedigrees being lost so long ago. These general Rules have been laid down; *viz.* first, that the *Jews* reckoned their Genealogy not only by a Natural, but Legal Descent, and that either by Adoption, or Marriage; so for Instance, *Jacob* (b), might be the proper Father of *Joseph*, and *Heli* (c), his Father by the Law. Secondly, They were also wont to call a Person *The Son* of such a one, though after a Generation or two, and to reckon the Grandson the Son of the Grandfather; as the Posterity of *Israel* are often called His Sons. However, the main Design of the Evangelist is to be respected; *viz.* to shew, That Jesus is the Messiah, of the Offspring of *David*, and of the Posterity

(y) *Matt.* i. 1. (z) *Gen.* xxii. 18. compared with *Acts* iii. 25, 26. 2 *Sam.* vii. 16.

(a) The Reader may see a large Account of this in *Bishop Kidder's Demonstration of the Messiah*, Part II. Chap. 6, &c.

(b) *Matt.* i. 16. (c) *Luke* iii. 28.

Posterity of *Abraham*. *Matthew* ended the Genealogy with *Abraham*, for the Sake of the *Jews*, who knew the Messiah should be one of his Posterity, according to God's Covenant with Him. *Luke* derived it up to *Adam* (to whom the Messiah was promised, and called *The Seed of the Woman*) no doubt, to comfort the *Gentiles*, with their Interest in Christ; forasmuch as they are the Posterity or Sons of *Adam*, though not the proper Posterity of *Abraham*.

Though *Bethlehem* was the City of the Ancestors of *Joseph* and *Mary*, as hath been said; yet they, and Christ with them, till his Manifestation, dwelt at *Nazareth* in *Galilee*, a very contemptible Place, as were the Inhabitants too; whence *Nathanael* demanded (d), *Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?* Hence (e) Christ was called in Contempt a *Nazarene*; and thereby very probably we are to understand (f), *That it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene*; not that any one Prophet said those express Words, but the Sense; for they spake of Christ, as *despised and reproached* (g.)

*Ninth Remark.* Concerning the *Dæmoniacks*, or the *Possessed* with the Devil, we are to understand, 1st, That it hath been acknowledged both by *Jews*

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and

(d) *John* i. 46.

(e) This Interpretation may be learnt from *St. Chrysostom*, ad 1 *Cor.* ii. 9. πᾶ γέγραπται λη' διὰ τοῦ ῥημάτων, ἀλλὰ τοῦ πραγμάτων, &c. Though he assigns another on *Matt.* ii. viz. Of the Prophecy being lost; but then the Evangelist would scarce have cited it. See *Casaubon*, Exercit. 7. §. 2.

(f) *Matt.* ii. 23.

(g) *Isa.* liii. 3 *Psal.* lxi. 9, 10.



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(f) *Matt.* ii. 23.

(g) *Isa.* liii. 3 *Psal.* lxi. 9, 10.

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and *Gentiles* (*b*), that the Devils have often possessed the Bodies of Mankind, and have been cast out: But they seem to have had the greatest Power about the Time of our Saviour's Appearance, which did the more manifest our Lord's Divine Authority in casting them out, and destroying that Power of theirs (*i*). For the Truth of which, the Primitive Christians (*k*) appealed to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. 2dly, That the Devils often afflicted Men with Diseases, which shewed the usual Symptoms of those which are natural, either by altering the Blood and Spirits, or some other Ways occasioning such Diseases: An Instance we have in *Job* (*l*). This seems to be the Case of the *Lunatick*, who is said often to fall into the Fire and Water, and to foam like such as are afflicted with the Falling Sicknefs (*m*), which Disease was brought upon him by the Devil that possessed him (*n*); for it is said, *Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour* (*o*). Sometimes it seems,

(*b*) *The Rabbins often mention the Devil's possessing and agitating Persons*, Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xvii. 15. and in Luc. xiii. 11. Compare Irenæus, Edit. Grabe, Oxon. 1702. l. 2. c. 5. prope finem, p. 123. l. 23. & notas ibid. And the ancient Chaldeans had a Notion that the Dæmons, insinuating into the Entrails, caused Epilepsies and Frenzy, Stanley's History of Philosophy, Part XV. Chap. 16. and Plutarch mentions Advice given by the Magi, to those who were possessed (*δαιμονιζοµενους*) to repeat the Ephesian Verses, Sympos. l. 7. Qu. 5. prope finem. And, which is very considerable, the Power of Ejecting Devils continued in the Church in the second Century, as appears from the Fathers cited by Grotius in Marc. xvi. 17.

(*i*) Matt. xii. 28, 29.

(*k*) Just. Martyr. Trypho, Edit. Jebb. p. 256. & Apolog. 2. § 6. Edit. Hutchin. Irenæus, ibid. aliquæ apud Grot. loco jam laudato

(*l*) Chap. ii. 6, 7.

(*m*) Matt. xvii. Luke ix.

(*n*) Matt. xvii. 18.

(*o*) See also Luke ix. 39. and xiii. 16



seems, that the Devil acted on the Bodies of Men, not after the usual Manner of a natural Disease, but in a more extraordinary Way; so on that Man *with an unclean spirit* (p), who brake in sunder even Chains and Fetters. Two also (q) were possessed, in an extraordinary Manner, *with devils*, which befought Christ to suffer them to go into the Herd of Swine.

*Tenth Remark.* Christ was to shew himself, in Person only, in the Country of the *Jews*, and to that People called *the lost sheep of the house of Israel* (r), who were the Posterity of *Jacob* or *Israel*: But he was to be published to the rest of the World, called *Gentiles*, by his Apostles afterwards; and therefore, in his first Mission of his Apostles, whilst himself was living, he charged them (s), *Not to go into the way of the Gentiles*; but after his Resurrection, he enlarged the Commission, *Go teach all Nations* (t).

*Eleventh Remark.* Seeing Christ, according to the Flesh, was of *Jewish* Extraction, and lived and died in the Country of the *Jews*; and seeing that People were generally his first Converts and Disciples, by whom the New Testament was written; it is necessary to observe the Phrases, or Forms of speaking, and Allusions that we meet with therein; which related to the Customs of the *Jewish* Law; and some particular Usages that were in our Saviour's Time, which give Light to divers Passages in the holy Gospel. Such as,

1st, The Scribes and Doctors, among the *Jews*,  
E 3 proudly

(p) *Mark* v. (q) In *Matt.* viii. 28, &c. (r) *Matt.* xv. 24.  
(s) *Matt.* x. 5. (t) *Matt.* xxviii. 19.

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proudly affected (*u*) to be saluted with peculiar Titles of Honour and Respect, above all others, as *Rabbi, my Father, my Master*. Again, these Rabbies and Scribes claimed (*x*) an authority to be believed and followed in whatsoever they taught; as if their Words were equal to the Law of God; nay, in some respect, to be more regarded; for they taught, that *a Prophet from God ought to shew a sign or a miracle, but their Traditions ought to be received on their own words*. This explains *Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 10.* where Christ forbids to be called *Rabbi, Father, or Master*; not that Titles of Honour and Respect are inconsistent with the Gospel (as some mistake the Place) for *St. John* styles the Aged, *Fathers* (*y*). And *St. Paul* styles Himself a *Father* to the *Corinthians* (*z*), and orders that *the Elders who rule well, be counted worthy of double honour* (*a*). But (*1st*) That we should not, like the Scribes and Pharisees among the *Jews*, proudly affect such Titles of Honour. And (*2dly*) That although the Governors of Christ's Church on Earth have such Authority (*b*) in Matters of Faith, as to take care the right Faith be preserved, and the Mouths of those stopped, who would corrupt the same (*c*), yet no Man should challenge an absolute Authority over the Faith of Men; so as to attribute unto earthly Guides or *Masters* (called also *Fathers*) such Infallibility as is due only to God, our Father in Heaven; but that we adhere to the Divine Authority of the Scriptures, as the only infallible Rule of Faith and Manners.

*2dly,*

(*u*) *Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xxiii. 7.*

(*x*) *Idem in Matt. xv. 2.*

(*y*) *1 John ii. 13.*      (*z*) *1 Cor. iv. 15.*

(*a*) *1 Tim. v. 17.*

(*b*) *The 20th Article of the Church of England.*

(*c*) *1 Tim. i. 3. Tit. iii. 10.*

2dly, The *Jews* esteemed the *Gentiles* so vile, that they accounted the very Ground where they lived to be unclean ; and therefore when the Apostles, whom Christ sent to preach unto the *Jews* his Kingdom, were rejected, He ordered them to *shake off the dust from their feet, as a testimony against them* (d), thereby expressing that they would be no more concerned with them, and so would not have so much as the very Dust of their Ground, on which they trod, to cleave unto their Feet ; but that for the future they would esteem them as a heathen People, and such to whom God's Covenant did not belong ; for it was a Doctrine taught amongst them, that the very Dust (e) of the Ground of the Gentiles and Heathen would pollute them. So that they took care how they carried away Pot-herbs from any Ground of a Gentile, lest some of the Mould should be carried away with them, and defile the pure *Israelites* : By this Action, the Apostles were to testify against them, that they looked on them as no better than Gentiles for refusing Christ and his Doctrine.

3dly, In Christ's Time, the *Jews* had their stated *Forms* (f) of Prayer, in Number eighteen ; by which they were every Day to pray to, and praise God ; and because all could not so easily repeat so many, when at home ; their Doctors reduced the Substance of them to a short Compendium. In their Synagogues, the *Cazan* (g) or Reader, repeats or sings the Prayers very loud ; with whom the rest

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join

(d) *Matt. x. 14. Luke ix. 5.*

(e) *Lightf. Hor. in Matt. x. 14.*

(f) *Buxtorf. Synag. c. 10. p. 207. Lightf. Hor. in Matt. vi. 9, &c. Leo Modena, Pars I. cap. 10, 11. Prideaux's Connect. Part I. Book vi. sub Anno 444.*

(g) *Leo Modena, ibid.*



join in a lower Tone, especially those eighteen before-mentioned, with others intermixed, which make up their Liturgy, or publick Service.

Farthermore, besides these set Forms for general Use, the *Jewish* Doctors were wont to compose other (*b*) peculiar Forms, which they taught their respective Scholars; as *John taught his disciples* (*i*), and which were more peculiarly adapted to their Occasions and Conditions. After the same Manner (*k*), Christ prescribed a set Form of Prayer and Praise (which is therefore called *the Lord's Prayer*) upon the Request of his Disciples, that he would teach them to pray, as *John taught his disciples*; which Prayer of Christ is composed in the plural Number, in Compliance, no doubt, with that (*l*) Rule of the *Jewish* Church, which obliged him that prayed, although he were alone, to associate himself with the Church; that is, to reckon himself a Fellow-Member of the Church; and so pray for others, as well as himself. Hence Christ hath taught us to pray, not *My*, but *Our* Father which art in Heaven, &c. It is also observed, that this *Our Lord's Prayer* (*m*) is for the most part composed out of the old *Jewish* Forms above-mentioned (it being the Custom of our Saviour to conform to the lawful and decent Usages of the *Jews* in his Time, both in civil and religious Matters.)

4thly, When the *Jews* received Profelytes, that is, Persons who came over to their Religion, they were (*n*) not only to circumcise, but also to sanctify  
or

(*b*) Lightf. Hor. in Matt. vi. 9.

(*i*) Luke xi.      (*k*) Matt. vi. and Luke xvii.

(*l*) Ibid.

(*m*) Idem ibid. ver. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

(*n*) Lightf. Hor. in Matt. iii. 6.

or cleanse them by Water, or baptize them (of which their Doctors ascribe the Original to *Jacob's* Injunction to his Household, that they should *put away the strange Gods that were among them, and be clean, and change their garments* (o). And to *Moses's* Command on Mount *Sinai*, that they should *wash their cloaths* (p). Hence *John the Baptist* in this Manner received those that came to him, as new Profelytes, repenting and forsaking their Sins, and thereby being qualified for the Kingdom of the Messiah, by baptizing them, and so preparing them for his Coming (q), which Rite afterwards our Lord instituted for the Sacrament of Admission into his Church (r), and to seal the Members thereof the Remission of their Sins (s), the Grace of the holy Spirit (t), and eternal Salvation (u). So that *John's* Baptism was (in compliance with the Usages of the *Jews*) only preparatory to our Lord's, who was to *come after* Him, and to appoint such a Baptism as was to intitle them to the spiritual Gifts, and to Grace and Salvation. Since Water hath so naturally a Property of cleansing, it is very plain and easy to apprehend it as a Representation of the Purifying of the Soul: Hence, besides the *Jews*, the (x) Heathens had their Lustrations or Washing with Water, for purifying themselves. Farthermore, as a Profelyte of the *Jews*, being baptized, was esteemed by them to become a *new-born child*, and to have cast off his old Relations (y); so the Christian Profelyte, being

(o) *Gen.* xxxv. 2. (p) *Exod.* xix. 10. (q) *Matt.* iii.  
 (r) *Matt.* xxviii. 19. (s) *Acts* xxii. 16. (t) *Matt.* iii. 11.  
 (u) *Mark* xvi. 16.  
 (x) *Dr. Spencer de Leg. Hebr. l. 3. Dissert. 3.*  
 (y) *Lightf. in Joh.* iii. 3.

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ing baptized, is said to be as one *born again*, to have *put off the old man*, and become a *new creature*.

The Form of baptizing, at first, was by *going into* the Water, or being dipped or plunged therein (z), which was not inconvenient in the *East*, where the Climate is warmer, and Multitudes daily bathe in the Rivers ; but in our cooler Climates, a Pouring on, or Sprinkling of Water, is most common. Sprinkling or Pouring on, in the Scripture, hath the Term of Baptizing given to it (a), *the Washing* (or as in the Original, *Baptizing*) † of *Tables* or *Beds* whereupon they leaned when they eat ; that is, pouring Water upon them, or sprinkling them with Water, if any legally unclean Person had touched them ; and St. *Paul* interprets *Baptizing*, by *cleansing with the Washing of Water* (b). The Grace of God is not confined to the Quantity of the Water ; but as a Spoonful of Wine in the other Sacrament is as significant of Christ's Blood, as a whole Cup ; so Sprinkling or Pouring on is an Application of Water to the Person baptized, as well as Plunging him in a River ; and Sprinkling or Pouring on is *Baptizing* in the Scripture Use of the Term, tho' not after the Manner of the Eastern Countries ; and although the ancient Christians generally baptized by Immersion or Dipping, yet in some Cases they allowed Sprinkling, as in Cases of Sickness, and Danger of Life, or when Persons were under Confinement, &c. (c) whereby it appears, that they did

(z) *Matt.* iii. 6, 16. *Acts* viii. 38.

(a) *Matt.* vii. 4.

† βαπτισμὸς-κλινῶν.

(b) *Eph.* v. 26.

(c) *Cyprian. Epist.* 69. Edit. Oxon. ad Magnum.



did not understand being Dipped or Plunged in Water so absolutely necessary, but that for proper Cases, Pouring on of Water, or Sprinkling was sufficient.

5thly, It was familiar with the People of the Eastern Countries, and the *Jewish* Doctors in particular, to use divers *common Sayings*, or *Proverbs*; for Example, they expressed the Doctrine of Wisdom and Instruction by the Metaphor (d) of Meat and Drink; and the Receiving or Entertaining such Doctrine by Eating and Drinking: Thus (e) *Wisdom crieth in the streets, Come eat of my bread, and drink of my wine that I have mingled*; that is, hearken to Wisdom and Instruction. Hence our Saviour exhorts (f), *Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth to everlasting life*; that is, by Faith in Christ, and embracing his Doctrine, to gain eternal Life. Thus also, they would signify a small Quantity of any thing, by likening (g) it to a *grain of mustard seed*, which was noted to be the smallest Seed in *Judea*, that produced so great a Plant; for though it does not so with us, yet in the hotter Climates, and particularly with them, it produced (h) great and high Branches, like a Tree; and therefore, our Saviour spoke according to the common Usage of the Country, when (i) he compared the small Beginning, but future Increase of the Gospel, to a *grain of mustard seed, which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown, it becometh a tree*. So also in the Southern Parts of *America*, there are Mustard Trees *higher than a man on horseback, and the birds build their nests*

(d) Grot. in Matt. xxvi. 26.

(e) Prov. ix. 5.

(f) John vi. 27.

(g) Lightf. Hor. in Matt. xiii. 22.

(h) Ibid.

(i) Matt. xiii. 32.

*nefts on them (k).* Again, the Word *Paradise* signifies properly a Garden, or delightful Walks, and particularly the Garden of *Eden*, where God placed our first Parents before their Fall. Hence it was used by the *Jews* (since the Time of *Esdra*s especially) for the happy and comfortable Station of pious Souls departed this Life, till the Resurrection (*l*). In which Sense, Christ promised the penitent Thief (*m*), *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*; which, no question the Thief understood according to the common Notion among the *Jews*; that is, not only to be remembered by Christ when he came into *his Kingdom*, as he prayed to be, and to be happy with him for ever, both in Soul and Body after the Resurrection; but in the mean time, to be in that happy State in respect to the Soul, which the *Jews* commonly prayed for, when their Friends were dying, *Let his soul be in Paradise*, or *with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*. Hence the Primitive Christians had the same Opinion of Paradise; and it is observed, that our Lord did not promise the penitent Thief, that he should that Day be with him in his *Kingdom*; for Christ was to ascend thither after his Resurrection, and make way for all his Servants to enter, in the same Method in which he went before: But *the Crown of Righteousness*, the perfect Consummation and Bliss is to be expected, when Christ shall invite, at the great Day, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom (n)*. Again, when the *Jews* would signify any thing unusual or difficult, they

(k) See Rogers's *Cruising Voyage*, p. 343.

(l) Lightf. in Luc. xxiii. 43.

(m) Luke xiii. 43.

(n) Grot. in Luc. xxiii. 43. *Bishop Taylor's Life of Christ.*  
Part III. ad §. 16. Num. 1.

they would say (o), *An elephant goes through a needle's eye*; which our Lord alludes to Matt. xix. 24.

6thly, Among the *Jews*, the Man was wont to be espoused (p), or betrothed to his Wife, some considerable Time before he married her: During which Time he might visit, but not lie with her (q). This explains Matt. i. 18. *Mary was espoused to Joseph before they came together.*

7thly, The *Jews*, in celebrating the great Feast of the Passover, were wont to use some particular *Sacramental Phrases*; which both clear our Saviour's Intention in instituting the Lord's Supper, and explain to us the Sense of some Expressions relating to it; for Instance, as the Lamb is termed in Scripture the Lord's Passover, though it was only the Memorial of it (r), so they were wont (s) to call the Lamb then eaten, *The body of the Lamb*; and to say of the Unleavened Bread, *This is the bread of affliction which our fathers did eat in Egypt*; that is, a Commemoration, or Representation of it. Thus Christ says of the Bread blessed and broken, and the Cup, *This is my body, This is my blood*; that is, to commemorate and represent his Body broken and wounded, and Blood shed; that by duly receiving it, we may both make a thankful Memorial and Representation of his Death and Sufferings, and also be made Partakers of the Benefits thereof. Again, as the *Jewish* Passover was a Feast upon the Sacrifice of a Lamb, for a thankful Remembrance of their Deliverance out of Egypt (t), so is the Lord's Supper a Feast, upon the

(o) Lightf. in Matt. xix. 24.

(p) Lightf. Hor. in Matt. i. 18. Leo Modena, *Part IV. c. 3.*

(q) See Deut. xx. 7.

(r) Exod. xii. 11.

(s) Ham. in Matt. xxvi. 26.

(t) Exod. xii.



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the *Memorial of the Sacrifice* of Christ's Body broken, and Blood shed, for a thankful Remembrance of *Christ our passover's being sacrificed for us*, in order to our Deliverance from Sin, Death, and Hell. Hence it is, that as the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, is a commemorative *Sacrifice*, so the *Jewish Term Altar* is applied to the Lord's Table (x). Farther, when the Unleavened Bread was set on the Table, the Master of the House blessed God, *for having created the fruits of the earth* (y): So Christ took Bread, and *blessed it*, or *gave thanks* for it to God (z). And as the Master of the House *blessed God for the fruit of the vine*, when they drank of the Wine (thence termed by them the Cup of Blessing) (a), so is *the cup which we drink*, called by the Apostle, *the cup of blessing* (b). And lastly, as the *Jews sung an hymn of praise to God*, at their Passover Supper, *for his stupendous wonders* (c), so Christ, with his Apostles, *sung an hymn*, at the Conclusion of his Supper.

There is a seeming Difference in the Relation given by the Evangelists, of the Passover, which Christ and the *Jews* eat that Year, in which He suffered. St. *Matthew* says (d), that Christ did eat the Passover the *Evening* before his Death; and yet St. *John* (e) tells us, that early the next Morning, *the Jews went out into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover*. Of this there are two Accounts given; the one, that by *the passover* in *John* is meant, not the Paschal Lamb, but the *Sheep and Oxen* eaten  
all

(x) *Heb.* xiii. 10.

(y) Buxtorf. *Synag.* c. 18. Lightf. *Hor.* in *Matt.* xxvi. 26.

(z) *Luke* xxii. 17. (a) Lightf. and *Ham.* on *1 Cor.* x. 16.

(b) *1 Cor.* x. 16. (c) Buxtorf. *ibid.*

(d) *Chap.* xxvi. 20. (e) *Chap.* xviii. 28.

all the seven Days of Unleavened Bread (*f*), which was called strictly the *Chagigah*; but in a general Sense the *Passover*, as making one Part of the Solemnity (*g*). The other Account is, that Christ, the Evening before his Death, kept the Passover in such manner, as the Circumstances of his approaching Death would allow; that is, by eating only the *Unleavened bread, and bitter herbs* (a Part of the Passover Feast) as it was usual for them to keep the Passover at home, who could not go to *Jerusalem* (*h*). The former Account is by many esteemed the most probable; because, when the Disciples are said by St. *Matthew* to make Provision to keep, and to *eat the passover* (*i*), it should seem that Christ, who on all Occasions exactly observed the Law, did keep and eat it, as it ought to be kept and eaten, and at the usual Time, as one of the Ancients observes (*k*); which St. *Mark* confirms, when he says (*l*), that when his Disciples asked him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, that thou mayest eat the Passover, it was *the first day of unleavened bread, at Evening, when they* (the Jews according to Custom) *killed the passover*—(and the *guest chamber furnished* at that Time, and *the hour being come*) (*m*), import the same; and that this was on *Thursday Evening*, St. *Paul* assures, when he affirms, that Christ instituted the Lord's Supper *the same night in which he*  
was

(*f*) *Deut.* xvi. 2. and *2 Chron* xxxv. 7, 8.

(*g*) For which consult *Lightf. Hor.* in *Joh.* xviii. 28. and *Dr. Whitby's Appendix to the Gospel of St. Mark.*

(*h*) See *Ham.* on *Mark* xiv. 12. and *Dr. Wells* on *Matt.* xxvi. 20.

(*i*) *Chap.* xxvi. 17, &c.

(*k*) *Chrysost.* in *Joh.* xviii. 28.

(*l*) *Chap.* xiv. 12.

(*m*) *Luke* xxii. 11, 14.

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*was betrayed* (n), which is allowed to be at the same Time when he eat the Passover. What St. *John* says (o), of the Day when Christ suffered, *It was the preparation of the passover*, is understood to import only the Passover *Friday*, or the *Friday* in the Paschal Festival; that is, the Day before the Paschal Sabbath (p).

8thly, The *Jews*, in reckoning their Hours, divided the whole Time from the Sun-rising to the Setting, into twelve equal Parts (q); beginning their Account from the Sun-rising. So that when the Sun was in the Equinox, and the Days and Nights of equal Length, then their Hours of Day and Night were equal too; and their first Hour of the Day was our sixth to the seventh in the Morning; their second Hour was our eighth, and so on; their sixth was our twelfth at Noon, and their twelfth Hour was our sixth at Night; but when the Days were longer or shorter, then their Hours proportionably took up more or less Time: Still they divided the Day or Time the Sun was up, how long or short soever, into twelve equal Parts: Hence (r), *Are there not twelve hours in the day?* So that (s) the *eleventh Hour* was the last Hour of the Day, save one. In such Manner they reckoned the Night, or Time between Sun-setting, and the next Rising; so that the third Hour of the Night (t), might be our Nine at Night, their sixth Hour of the Night our Midnight, and so on.

They had also three other noted Times in the Day, of going to the Temple to Prayer (u); viz. the

(n) 1 Cor. xi. 23. (o) *John* xix. 14.

(p) As Mark xv. 42. the παρασκευη is the προαβειτον. See Dr. Whitby in Loc.

(q) Buxtorf. Synag. Jud. c. 13. ad initium.

(r) *John* xi. 9. (s) Matt. xx. 9, 12. (t) Acts xxiii. 23.

(u) Grot. in Matt. xxvii. 45. Ham. in Joh. xix. 6. and Luke ii. 18. Dr. Whitby in Acts iii. 1.



the *third*, the *sixth*, and *ninth* Hours: The first and last were the Times of offering the daily Burnt-offering (x), viz. at our Nine in the Morning, and Three in the Afternoon. Each of these stated Times contained the Space of three Hours; and that whole Space was called by the Name of the Hour on which it began; as from the third Hour of the Day to the sixth, was the third Hour of Prayer, because it began at the third Hour, or our Nine in the Morning; so from the sixth Hour of the Day to the ninth, was the sixth Hour of Prayer; and from the ninth Hour, to their twelfth, was the ninth Hour of Prayer; as in the following Table.

*The Upper Line is our Account, the lower is the Jewish,*

7	8	9	.	10	11	12		1	2	3	4	5	6
1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11	12
The third Hour of Prayer.						Sixth Hour of Prayer.				Ninth Hour of Prayer.			

There was also among the *Jews* another Reckoning of their Time, proper to be taken notice of, which is, that the natural Day, consisting (y) of one Night and Day (z), began with them at Evening; so (a) *the evening and the morning were the first day*, the Evening being set before the Morning, because Darknes was in Time before the Light (b). Accordingly they (c) still begin  
 VOL. II. F their

(x) *Exod.* xxix. 39.

(y) *Nυχθήμερον* Grot. & Ham. in *Matt.* xii. 40.

(z) As *2 Cor.* xi. 25. (a) *Gen.* i. (b) Ainsworth in *Loc.*

(c) *Leo Modena, Part III. c. 1. and Mr. Ockley's Notes thereon.*

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their Sabbath on *Friday* Evening: The Reason is, because they use the Lunar Year; and the New Moon cannot be discerned but at that Time. Now, as other People, so the *Jews* were wont to express one whole Thing by a Part of it, by a Figure frequently in Use; and therefore, any Part of the natural Day (consisting of one Night and Day) may express the Whole. This explains the Account given of the Time of our Saviour's Resurrection (*d*), that he was *three days and three nights in the heart of the earth*: Now, he was buried on *Friday*, and arose on *Sunday* Morning, and so being in the Grave one Part of the first natural Day, or Evening and Morning, which began on *Thursday* Night, and ended with *Friday* Evening; that is here meant for one Night and Day; the second is *Friday* Night and *Saturday*; the third is *Saturday* Night and *Sunday*; on the Morning whereof he arose. By the same Way of including the first and last Day, we may reconcile Christ's bringing the three Disciples up to the Mount (*e*), *after six days*, with his doing it (*f*), *about eight days after*. For *Matthew* computed only the *six* Days between the Discourse of Christ, *Chap. 16.* at the End, and his Ascent up to the Mount; whereas *Luke* included both that Day of Christ's Discourse and his Ascension; and so they were in all about eight Days. Lastly, we read of twofold *Weeks* among the *Jews*; the one was ordinary, consisting of seven Days; the other extraordinary, or *Prophe-tical*, consisting of seven Years; so (*g*) *Daniel's seventy weeks* are seventy times seven Years (*b*).

9thly,

(*d*) *Matt. xii. 40.*

(*f*) *Luke ix. 28.*

(*b*) See also *Lev. xxv. 8.*

(*e*) *Matt. xvii. 1.*

(*g*) *Dan. ix. 24.*

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9thly, The *Jews* were wont to express themselves by *Signs* and *Actions*, as well as *Words* (as hath been observed at the End of the first General Rule for interpreting the Holy Scriptures) (i), and particularly when their Minds were disturbed, they were wont to express it by tearing some Part of their Garments; which Action, though it may seem strange to us, was yet as usual among them as any other particular Custom is among us; and so it was with some other of the Eastern People, particularly the *Persians* (k). Thus when *Jacob* apprehended his Son *Joseph* to be torn in Pieces, he *rent his cloaths* (l); and therefore we find the High Priest to rend his Cloaths, when he thought Christ had blasphemed, in affirming himself to be the Son of God, and that he should come hereafter in the Clouds of Heaven (m).

10thly, It was customary (n) with the *Jews* to be called by a *Jewish* Name among their own Countrymen, and by another among the *Gentiles*. Hence we find, *Thomas* called *Didymus* (o), and *Tabitha* called *Dorcas* (p), and *Saul* had the Roman Name of *Paul*.

11thly, The Eastern People (of whom the *Jews* were a Part) were accustomed to carry Presents (q) to the King, or any Person of Honour and Authority, at the same time that they visited him, or requested a Favour; that being esteemed an Expression of Respect, and accounted due on such Occasions. Thus *Jacob* instructs his Sons to carry

F 2

a Pre-

(i) *Numb.* xxvii. (k) *Grot.* in *Matt.* xxvi. 65.

(l) *Gen.* xxxvii. 34. See also *Gen.* xlv. 13.

(m) *Matt.* xxvi. 65.

(n) *Lightf. Hor.* in 1 *Cor.* i. 1.

(o) *John* xi. 16. (p) *Acts* ix. 36.

(q) See the Appendix, Num. vi.



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a Present to *Joseph*, when they went to buy Food of him in *Egypt* (r). Hence it was, that the Magi, or wise Men from the East, brought their Presents of Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh, when they visited Christ the Messiah, or King of the *Jews* (s).

12thly, The Disciples or Scholars among the *Jews* were wont to sit at the Feet of their Teachers (t), while they were instructed in the Laws and Exercise of their Religion; and it was a common Saying among them, that a diligent Scholar or Hearer must be *strewed with the Dust of his Master's Feet*. Hence we find the Man, out of whom Christ had cast the Devils, which had possessed him, being now in his right Mind, *sitting at the Feet of Jesus*, as being attentive to his Doctrine (u). And in this Respect, *Mary* is said to *sit at Jesus's feet, and hear his word* (x); and *Paul* was *brought up at the feet of Gamaliel*, and taught the Law (y).

13thly, The *Jews*, especially the richer Sort, used to hire Persons to make Lamentation, at the Death and Funerals of their Friends or Relations; and that not only in Voice, but by Musical Instruments (z). Hence (a) *the Minstrels*, &c. at the Death of the Ruler's Daughter.

They buried their Dead (according to the Manner used in the Eastern Countries to this Day) (b) most commonly, not in the Earth, but in Tombs

(r) *Gen.* xliiii. 11. See also *Gen.* xxxii. 13. 1 *Kings* x. 2.  
2 *Kings* v. 5.

(s) *Matt.* ii. 11.

(t) Grot. in *Luc.* x. 39. Maimon. de studio legis, c. 3. §. 7. Edit. Oxon. Verba legis reperiuntur inter humiles, qui se pulvere pedum sapientum conspergunt.

(u) *Luke* viii. 35.

(x) *Luke* x. 39.

(y) *Acts* xxii. 3.

(z) Lightf. Hor. in *Matt.* ix. 13.

(a) *Matt.* ix. 23.

(b) Vide Appendix, Numb. ii.

Tombs or Caves, and Vaults hewn out of the (c) Rocks. *Abraham* is said to bury *Sarah* his Wife in the Cave of *Macbpelab* (d). In such a Sepulchre *Lazarus's*, and Christ's Body were laid (e).

1<sup>4</sup><sup>thly</sup>, God having adopted the *Israelites* for his peculiar People, was pleased to declare himself in a more especial Manner their *Father* (f). Accordingly, in our Saviour's Time, the *Jews* were wont to call upon God as their *Father in Heaven* (g). In the same Manner, Christ, who used to comply with the common Language of the Country, taught his Disciples, being *Jews*, to pray, *Our Father, which art in Heaven*. The *Jews* were wont to magnify themselves, especially on this Account, that they, of all other People, were the Sons of God (h). But now, under the Gospel, the Christians of all Nations are thro' Christ the Children of God by Adoption; and therefore, St. *John* declares, that, *as many as received him, to them gave He Power, or Privilege, or Dignity, to become the Sons of God* (i); and adds (k), *which are born, not of blood, or of the Posterity of Abraham, but of God*. And hence Christ hath taught us also to cherish our Hopes in God, by calling on him in our Prayers, as *our Father*; for though we are not of *Abraham's* Seed,

F 3

yet

(c) Lightfoot Centur. Othorograph. 100. ante Hor. in Matt. and see the Appendix, Num. ii.

(d) Gen. xxiii. 19.

(e) Compare Bishop Pearson in the 4<sup>th</sup> Article, and Buried, p. 221. *John* xi. 38. *Matt.* xxvii. 60.

(f) *Exod.* iv. 22. *Deut.* xxxii. 6.

(g) Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. vi. 9.

(h) See *Isaiah* lxiii. 16. (i) *John* i. 12.

(k) *Ver.* 15.

yet through Christ we are the *adopted* Children of God (l).

*Adoption* is a Term taken from the Civil Law, and signifies a Person's taking the Child of another for his own, to make him his Heir: This being applied unto God, is a Favour vouchsafed to the Members of Christ's Church, to be accounted the Children of God through Grace, which by Nature were the Children of (or subject to) Wrath. Here also it may be farther remarked, that as the ancient Church of the *Jews* (or the Body of that People) were stiled the Sons or Children, so also the *Chosen* or *Elect*, of God (m). *Because he loved thy Fathers, therefore he chose, or elected, their Seed after them*; that is, their whole Seed, or the whole Nation of the *Jews* (n). Accordingly, the Word *Elected*, or *Chosen*, in the New Testament, often signifies, not any particular Persons (as some have mistaken it) but the whole Body or Church of true Christians. Thus, (o) *they shall deceive the very Elect*, or true Christians; and (p) *ye are a chosen, or elect Generation* (q).

15thly, Among the many Traditions of the *Jews*, one was concerning (r) *the Vow of Prohibition or Interdict*; as if a Man having rashly vowed not to do such a Thing for another, he was bound by that Vow, however the Laws of God command him to do it. Hence, if a Son, out of Rashness or Covetousness, vowed, that whatever Part of his Substance his Parent might stand in Need of, should be as a Gift to God; that is,  
*Corban*

(l) *Gal.* iv. 4, 5. *Eph.* i. 5. (m) *Deut.* iv. 97.

(n) So *Deut.* vii. 6, 7. (o) *Matt.* xxiv. 24.

(p) 1 *Pet.* ii. 9.

(q) See Dr. Whitby in 1 *Pet.* ii. 9.

(r) Grotius, Hammond, and Lightfoot, in *Matt.* xv. 5.



*Corban* (s), (which signifies a Thing consecrated to God, and not to be employed to common Uses) their Tradition was, that a Son, having so vowed, might refuse to succour his indigent Parents, lest he should become guilty of the Violation of his Vow. Hence our Saviour accuses them (t); ye say, *Whosoever shall say to his father or mother, it is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me, and honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free: Thus ye have made the commandment of God of none effect, by your Tradition.*

16thly, It was customary over the Eastern Parts, and so among the *Jews*, for Servants to wash their Master's Feet, after returning from Abroad, to cleanse them from Filth (as it was anciently,) (u); because in those hot Countries, they frequently walked with Sandals (which were Soles tied on their Feet) and sometimes with naked Feet. This Custom we read of in the Times of Christ (x). And this Office of Washing their Feet, Christ did for his Disciples, as a Servant, to teach them Humility (y). Hence St. Paul reckons it as an Instance of Piety, *to wash the saints feet* (z). The same Usage still continues in the East; for when Pilgrims (a) arrive at *Jerusalem*, they are received with this Kindness of Washing their Feet.

*Eleventh Remark.* For the understanding of the *Parables*, observe 1st, That the Way in which the *Jewish* Rabbies and Doctors instructed their

F 4

Scholars

(s) Mark vii. 11.

(t) Matt. xv. 5, 6.

(u) Gen. xviii. 4. 1 Sam. xxv. 41.

(x) Luke vii. 38. Lightfoot Hor. in Joh. xiii. 5.

(y) John xiii. 5.

(z) 1 Tim. v. 10.

(a) Thevenot Trav. Part I. Chap. 36.

Scholars (*b*), according to the Custom of the Eastern Countries (observed by one of the Ancients who lived therein) (*c*) was frequently by Stories and Parables; which set forth spiritual Things under certain Representations or Similitudes, taken from Affairs and Customs in the World. Thus, for Example (*d*), one of the Rabbies encourages a Diligence in God's Servants: "This Matter" (says he) is like unto a King, who invited his Servants, but did not appoint the Time. Those of them that were Wise, adorned themselves, and sat at the Gate of the Palace, to be ready; but the Foolish went to their Business. The King on a sudden enquires for his Servants; the Wise entered with their Ornaments on, the other in a mean and indecent Dress: The King rejoiced in the Wise, but was enraged against the Foolish."

Another of their Rabbies (*e*) teaches Humility, by the following Parable: "Three Men, says he, were bidden to a Feast; a Prince, a Wise Man, and an humble Man. The Prince sat highest; next him the Wise Man, and the Humble Man lowest. The King observed it, and asked the Prince, Why sittest thou highest? He said, because I am Prince. Then he said to the Wise Man, Why sittest thou next? He said, because I am a Wise Man. And to the Humble Man, Why sittest thou lowest? Because I am humble. The King seated the Humble Man highest, and the Wise Man still in his Place, and the Prince lowest."

After

(*b*) Grotius & Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. xiii. 3.

(*c*) *Familiares est Syris, & maxime Palestinis, ad omnem sermonem suum Parabolas jungere. Hieronym. in Matt. xviii. 23.*

(*d*) Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. xxv. 2.

(*e*) Lightfoot's Harmony, *Ann.* 33. p. 49.

After this Manner, the *Jewish* Doctors used to instruct their People, who had a kind of natural Genius to that Sort of Discoursing. Hence our Lord complied with the Customs of the *Jews*, and spake so many Parables, which tended much to Edification, of the *Jews* especially, who were accustomed to that Method; for thereby the Thing was shewed as it were in an Image or Picture; and the Story delighted the Hearer, and so the more engaged Attention, and fixed the Instruction: Also a Reproof found an easier Entrance this Way, than when offered in downright Terms. Thus *Nathan* reproved *David* (f).

2dly, Notwithstanding Parables were thus suitable to the Custom and Temper of the *Jews*; yet Christ gives another Reason for his Speaking by Parables to some of the People (g), because to them it was *not given*, or allowed to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, or (b), *That seeing they may see, and not perceive*. Not that they were unavoidably deprived of the Means of Conviction; for, first, most of his Parables were intelligible enough to the Well-disposed and Attentive among them; of whom many became his Disciples: But as for those who were *without* (i), no better prepared to receive the Truth than heathen Persons, their own Wickedness and Perverseness was the Cause of their not understanding them, as it is more fully explained in *Matt. xiii. 12.* because *they had not*, that is, were not disposed to improve the Knowledge they had enjoyed; and *they seeing, see not*, Ver. 13. that  
is,

(f) 2 Sam. xii. 1, &c. See also the Parable of *Jehoshaphat*, King of *Israel*, 2 Kings xiv. 9. and of the Vineyard, *Isa. v. 1*, &c.

(g) *Matt. xiii. 11.* (b) As in *Mark iv. 12.*

(i) *Mark iv. 11.*



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is, wilfully shut their Eyes against the Light. Secondly, The Doctrine which Christ taught concerning *Faith* and *Manners* is very plain and evident; and if some of the Parables were obscure, they are those which (*k*) contain *the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, Ver. 11. which they might have asked him the Interpretation of (as his Disciples did, and as Scholars and Hearers were wont to do). These *Mysteries* concerned the Divine Dispensation under the State of the Gospel, and the Event of its Institution, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; which Christ thought not fit more plainly to shew those, who were of such an obstinate and perverse Temper; and came not with a sincere Design to improve themselves; but discovered those Mysteries to the Apostles, as he did, Ver. 18. in the Parable of the Sower, shewing the Effect which the Preaching of the Gospel would have according to Mens Dispositions. So the wonderful Progress of the Gospel, from so small Beginning, is signified, Ver. 31. by the strange Growth of a small Mustard-Seed, in the Country of the *Jews* (*l*), above all other like Sort of Seeds. Again, the powerful Influence of the Gospel on the Hearts of Men throughout the World is set forth, by the working and dispersing of a little Leaven over the whole Lump of Meat, Ver. 33.

3dly, The Parables are to be understood as to the main Design or Scope (*m*) of them, other Circumstances

(*k*) Grotius in Matt. xiii. 10.

(*l*) See the Tenth Remark on the Gospels above, Num. v.

(*m*) Maimon. in præfat. ad more Nevoch. Sensem interiorem parabolæ, sub literæ externæ cortice latentem assimilent [Sapientes] margaritæ pretiosæ, &c. & paulo post, Ubi tota parabola rem significatam totam exhibet, multa quidem habentur verba, sed non singula pondus habent, verum inserviunt tantum ad elegantiam, &c.

cumstances being added to fill up the Story ; as the unjust Steward (n) is pronounced to us for an Example, not in the unjust Part of cheating his Lord ; for that is only the filling up the Story ; but in using what of the World is now in our Hands, with Prudence for our future Advantage ; as that Steward was cunning in making Friends of his Lord's Creditors, by lessening their Debts, and thereby provided for himself, that when he was dismissed, they might receive him into their Houses ; so we should contrive to make our worldly Treasures subservient to our future Benefit, by disposing a part of them charitably, thereby laying up before-hand a Treasure in Heaven. So again (o), Christ is compared to a Thief, not in respect of Theft, but the sudden Surprise.

4thly, As for the Expression, at the Beginning of most of the Parables, *The kingdom of heaven is like, &c.* Here, *the kingdom of heaven* signifies sometimes the Gospel of the Kingdom, or the State of the Gospel, or the Manifestation of the Messiah, and the Success thereof ; and sometimes God's dealing with Men under the Gospel State (p) : *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind ;* that is, in the Gospel State, and at the publishing Christ the Messiah, many, both good and bad, pretend to be his Disciples and Followers, and are outward Members of the visible Church of Christ ; but at the Judgment-Day, they shall be distinguished. Again (q), *The kingdom of heaven*

(n) Luke xvi.

(o) Luke xii. 39. (p) Matt. xiii. 47.

(q) Matt. xviii. 23.

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is, wilfully shut their Eyes against the Light. Secondly, The Doctrine which Christ taught concerning *Faith* and *Manners* is very plain and evident; and if some of the Parables were obscure, they are those which (k) contain *the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*, Ver. 11. which they might have asked him the Interpretation of (as his Disciples did, and as Scholars and Hearers were wont to do). These *Mysteries* concerned the Divine Dispensation under the State of the Gospel, and the Event of its Institution, both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*; which Christ thought not fit more plainly to shew those, who were of such an obstinate and perverse Temper; and came not with a sincere Design to improve themselves; but discovered those Mysteries to the Apostles, as he did, Ver. 18. in the Parable of the Sower, shewing the Effect which the Preaching of the Gospel would have according to Mens Dispositions. So the wonderful Progress of the Gospel, from so small Beginning, is signified, Ver. 31. by the strange Growth of a small Mustard-Seed, in the Country of the *Jews* (l), above all other like Sort of Seeds. Again, the powerful Influence of the Gospel on the Hearts of Men throughout the World is set forth, by the working and dispersing of a little Leaven over the whole Lump of Meat, Ver. 33.

3dly, The Parables are to be understood as to the main Design or Scope (m) of them, other Circumstances

(k) Grotius in Matt. xiii. 10.

(l) See the Tenth Remark on the Gospels above, Num. v.

(m) Maimon. in præfat. ad more Nevoch. Sensum interiorem parabolæ, sub literæ externæ cortice latentem assimilent [Sapientes] margarinæ pretiosæ, &c. & paulo post, Ubi tota parabola rem significatam totam exhibet, multa quidem habentur verba, sed non singula pondus habent, verum inserviunt tantum ad elegantiam, &c.



cumstances being added to fill up the Story ; as the unjust Steward (*n*) is pronounced to us for an Example, not in the unjust Part of cheating his Lord ; for that is only the filling up the Story ; but in using what of the World is now in our Hands, with Prudence for our future Advantage ; as that Steward was cunning in making Friends of his Lord's Creditors, by lessening their Debts, and thereby provided for himself, that when he was dismissed, they might receive him into their Houses ; so we should contrive to make our worldly Treasures subservient to our future Benefit, by disposing a part of them charitably, thereby laying up before-hand a Treasure in Heaven. So again (*o*), Christ is compared to a Thief, not in respect of Theft, but the sudden Surprise.

*4thly*, As for the Expression, at the Beginning of most of the Parables, *The kingdom of heaven is like*, &c. Here, *the kingdom of heaven* signifies sometimes the Gospel of the Kingdom, or the State of the Gospel, or the Manifestation of the Messiah, and the Success thereof ; and sometimes God's dealing with Men under the Gospel State (*p*) : *The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind* ; that is, in the Gospel State, and at the publishing Christ the Messiah, many, both good and bad, pretend to be his Disciples and Followers, and are outward Members of the visible Church of Christ ; but at the Judgment-Day, they shall be distinguished. Again (*q*), *The kingdom of heaven*

(*n*) Luke xvi.

(*o*) Luke xii. 39.

(*p*) Matt. xiii. 47.

(*q*) Matt. xviii. 23.

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ven is like unto a certain king, who would take account of his servants ; that is, God's dealing with Man according to the Covenant of the Gospel, is resembled to a King calling his Servants to account.

5thly, Some Parables are to be understood, not as having respect primarily to the Case of *particular* Christians, but the Calling of the *Gentiles* in general, and the Rejection of the *Jews* ; as (r) the Parable of the Householder, that went out at the ninth and eleventh Hour, or the latter End of the Day, to hire Labourers into his Vineyard, seems chiefly to signify the Calling of the *Gentiles* in the latter Age of the World ; and the Complaint of those who were first hired, for being made but equal to them who were called afterwards, seems to point out the *Jews* being offended at their Equality with the *Gentiles* in the Dispensation of the Gospel. In like manner, the Parable of the two Sons (s) may denote the State of *Jews* and *Gentiles* ; the latter of which, although, like the prodigal Son, they had cast off the true Religion, and run into Wickedness ; if, upon the Preaching of the Gospel, they repent and believe in Christ, even they shall be kindly received into the Church, as well as the elder Brother the *Jew*. And (t), the Parable of the unthankful Husband, to whom a Vineyard was let out, and who slew the Householder's Servants and his Son, for which they were destroyed ; shewing God's Judgments on the *Jews*, who resisted and persecuted the old Prophets, and even Christ, the Son of God himself, that they should be cast off, and the Kingdom of God given to another Nation ; viz. the *Gentiles* (u). So (x), the

(r) *Matt. xx. 1.*

(s) *Luke xv.*

(t) *Matt. xxi. 33.*

(u) *Ver. 43.*

(x) *Matt xxii. 1.*

the Parable of the Person invited to the Marriage-Feast, who would not come, no doubt signified the *Jews* refusing the Terms of the Gospel, and their Rejection; and the inviting those on the *Highways* imported the Calling of the *Gentiles*; though, in a secondary Sense, these Parables may be applied to particular Cases and Persons; as the Rewards allowed to that Person, who came into the Vineyard late, may comfort such to whom the Gospel was only revealed in their old Age; and as soon as they are *hired*, or have the Knowledge of the Gospel, *labour* in the Vineyard, discharge their Christian Duties: So the Prodigal Son's Penitence and Return being accepted, may encourage the timely and true Penitent.

*Twelfth Remark.* As for the *Miracles* wrought by Christ; since no Authority, inferior to that which formerly established the Law, could be capable of repealing it (y); it was necessary, that he should work Miracles, who came to take down that Way of Worship, which had been at first settled by a Power of Miracles in *Moses*, that God might not be wanting to the Faith of that People, which had received their Law by Signs and Wonders from Heaven; but that there should be as strong an Evidence given to them, that the Fulness of Time was come, when that Dispensation was to have an End, and to give Place to another more perfect, which was to be established instead of it. We plainly find our Saviour very often appealing to his Miracles, as the Evidence of his Divine Commission (z): *If I had not done the works among*

(y) See *Bishop Stillingfleet's Orig. Sacr.* l. 2. c. 9. §. 2, 3.

(z) *John xv.* 24.



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*among them, which no man else did, they had not had sin*; that is, in not believing Him. Whereby Christ both sets forth the Necessity of his working Miracles, in order to the Conviction of the World, and the Greatness of the Miracles which he wrought: He did those which no Man else had done, no not *Moses*, or *Elias*, in curing all manner of Diseases by the Word of his Mouth. Again, the Power of Miracles did evidently declare that Christ was the promised Messiah, in whom the Prophecies, concerning the Miracles which the Messiah should work, were exactly fulfilled; as that of *Isa xxxv. 5, 6. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped; then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing*; and therefore it is observable of *John the Baptist*, that he wrought *no miracles (a)*, God reserving the Glory of Miracles wholly to the Name of Christ, that the Evidence of his being the Messiah might be made more clear, by the Miracles which he wrought; and that the Minds of People might not be distracted between *John* and *Christ*. It may here be farther remarked, concerning the Miracles wrought by Christ; that there appears a Difference between them, and those wrought by *Moses*; which last were, for the most part, of small Durance, and of a horrible Effect; as the Plagues in *Egypt*, and the Punishment of those who murmured in the Desert: Whereas the Miracles Christ wrought, had a lasting Effect, and were beneficial to Men; as in curing their Diseases and Infirmities.

After what hath been remarked, concerning the Necessity of Christ's Miracles, it should be enquired

(a) *John x. 41.*

quired why he so often gave Charge to *conceal his Miracles* (b): *He strictly charged* the blind Men, whose eyes he had opened, thus---*See that no man know it* (c). This seems to be done, not only to avoid Vain-Glory; but, (1<sup>st</sup>), He knew the Malice of the Scribes and Pharisees, with the other Rulers of the *Jews*; and that they would make an ill Use of the Accounts told them of his miraculous Works, and be the more incensed against him, and seek the sooner to destroy him (as we find they did upon their own seeing him heal the Man with the withered Hand) (d), but *his time* was not then come, and therefore he would have his Miracles concealed from them. 2<sup>dly</sup>, Another Reason might be, to prevent the *Jews* from making Insurrections, on pretence of his being a *temporal king*; for as such they expected our Messiah should appear, as it hath been observed before; but *his kingdom was not of this world*; and therefore, although he did enough to prove himself the Messiah, yet he would not have the Effects of his mighty Power so blazoned abroad, as to indulge the People in their Conceit of his being such a temporal Messiah and King, as they expected: Thus, when *they would take him by force*, upon his feeding five thousand with five Loaves, and two Fishes, he withdrew himself from them, and *departed into a mountain himself alone* (e). For the same Cause, he might charge his Disciples, to *tell no man*, at that Time, that he was the Christ or Messiah (f). Again, Christ's Resurrection, and the attesting it by the Powers of the Holy Spirit, was to be the last and most satisfactory

Proof

(b) Matt. ix. 30.

(c) So Matt. xii. 16. and in other Places.

(d) Mark iii. 6. (e) John vi. 14, 15. (f) Luke ix. 21.

Proof which He thought fit to give of his Commission, and to gain Credit to all his former Miracles. Hence we find Him so often enjoining his Disciples, not to publish his Works till after his Resurrection, and the confirming of that, by the undeniable Power of the Holy Ghost on the Apostles, who attested it (g).

*Thirteenth Remark.* It was most requisite, that Christ, as being our Mediator, should suffer Death, if we consider Him in regard to any Part of his Mediatory Office; either, (1st), As a *Prophet*, or Teacher come from God, to confirm the Truth of his Doctrine by his Death, and to give us an Example of Obedience to the Will of God, and of Humility and Patience. Or, 2dly, As a *Priest*, to offer an acceptable Sacrifice for the Remission of Sins: Now this was the Notion of an Expiatory Sacrifice, both among the *Jews* and *Gentiles* (b) (which made them the easier to understand the Nature and Cause of the Sacrifice of Christ) viz. that the Sin of one Person was transferred on another, or on a Beast; who was upon that devoted and offered up to God, and died and suffered in the room of the offending Person; and by this Oblation, the Punishment of Sin being laid on the Sacrifice, an Expiation was made for Sin, and the Sinner was believed to be reconciled to God. Now, on the one hand, it was not possible that the Blood of Bulls or Goats should *take away sins* (i), that is, any otherwise than as  
being

(g) *Matt.* xvi. 20. and xvii. 19. *Eph.* i. 19.

(b) *Grotius De satisfactione Christi.* c. 10. See what has been said concerning the Sacrifices under the Law, in Part I. Chap. 9.

(i) *Heb.* x. 4.



being a Type or Shadow ; and all that had the Nature of Man, besides Christ, had Sins of their own, and therefore could not atone for others : Wherefore he being the only one, who was Partaker of Man's Nature, who had never sinned himself, and had united the Human Nature to the Divine (which gave a Dignity to His Sufferings) was to *make his soul an offering for sin* (k), or to *die for our sins* (l), whereby he made an *atonement* for us (m), and became a *propitiation for our sins* : (n) That is, what the Sin-Offerings were to the *Jews*, a Sacrifice to appease God's Anger, and to render Him propitious or reconciled to us. Though there was this Peculiar in Christ's Sacrifice, that he was both the Priest, and the Sacrifice too.

*Lastly*, It was necessary Christ should die, that as a *King*, being afterwards risen again, he might conquer and triumph over Death and the Grave.

The particular Death which Christ suffered, was by being crucified on the *Cross* (o) ; which was a Beam, or Piece of Wood set in the Ground upright ; on which was another Beam laid cross near the Top : The Hands of the Person that was crucified were stretched out and nailed to the cross Beam, and his Feet were nailed down to the other. This was a Punishment among the *Romans* for the highest Crimes, and was esteemed the most painful (p) Death ; infomuch, that in their Language they called a most violent Pain, a *cruciating* (q) or suffering the Cross. It was also reckoned the most infamous Death, and never inflicted on a Free-

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man,

(k) *Isa.* liii. 10.

(l) *1 Cor.* xv. 3.

(m) *Rom.* v. 11.

(n) *1 Job.* ii. 2.

(o) *Pearson on the Creed, Artic.* 4. Was crucified.

(p) *Ibid.* *Pœnæ extremum.*

(q) *Cruciatu.*

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man, but only on Slaves and Fugitives ; and therefore called *The Punishment of Slaves* (r). Whereby it appears, that Christ hath undergone the most tormenting, and shameful or accursed Death ; and hath thereby redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; for it is written, *cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree* (s). The Providence of God hath been observed before (t), in ordering it so that Christ should suffer under a *Roman Governor*, otherwise he had not been crucified ; that being a kind of Death which was not inflicted upon any by the *Jews*, but by the *Roman Governors* (u).

*Fourteenth Remark.* Concerning Christ's Manifestation of himself, after his Resurrection : The holy Gospel acquaints us, that the Apostles saw him ascend up into Heaven, but they did not actually see him arise out of his Sepulchre. The Reason is evident, for it was a sufficient Confirmation of their Faith in his Resurrection, that they saw the Sepulchre empty, and Christ actually appearing to, and conversing with them ; but they were not to see him in Heaven till themselves were admitted thither ; and therefore they ought to behold him ascending, that they might evidence the Truth of it to the World.

Again, Christ when risen from the Dead, and when He ascended into Heaven, was not pleased to shew himself *openly to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God* (x). These Witnesses themselves had sufficient, sensible, and frequent Evidences given them thereof (p).

(r) Servile supplicium, ibid.

(s) Deut. xxi. 23. Gal. iii. 13.

(t) In the former Part, concerning the Government of Pontius Pilate, Chap. 22.

(u) Casaubon Exerc. 16. Ann. 34. Num. 92.

(x) Acts x. 40, 41.

of (p). But why did he not shew himself to all the People, especially the Rulers, who, if convinced, might have rendered the Truth of it beyond Dispute? First, the Chief Priests and Elders, with the other obstinate *Jews*, would not have believed in Him, though they had seen him after he was risen, and when He ascended; since they could harden their Hearts against his so many wonderful Works, as if wrought by the Prince of Devils; and had consulted to put *Lazarus* to Death, that they might stifle the Belief of Christ's Divine Power in raising him from the Grave (q). It was also requisite, that our *Faith* in Christ should be attended with some Difficulty, whereby Christians might be the rather entitled to the glorious Reward promised thereto (r),

But then, it has been farther objected, that, if for the Reasons above-mentioned, Christ would not shew himself to be alive again to his declared and prejudiced Enemies, why not to some indifferent Persons, who were neither engaged for, nor against, Him? Now, if such indifferent Persons should nevertheless not believe his Doctrine, they would not have propagated it, and so have been useless to the main Design of Christ's confirming his Resurrection: But if they should be convinced, then those who could do Service to the Doctrine of the Resurrection, must be Converts to Christ's Religion, and therefore not indifferent, unconcerned Persons: So that Christ chose the most effectual Way; especially if we consider, in the second Place, that the miraculous Gifts of speaking

G 2

divers

(p) *John* xx. 19 to 30. and Chap. 21. *Luke* xxiv. 36 to 45.

(q) *John* xii. 10, 11.

(r) Ut fides, non mediocri præmio destinata, difficultate conflaret. *Tertul. Apol. c. 21.*



divers Languages, and healing Diseases, and the like, with which the Apostles were endued after Christ's Ascension, for a Confirmation of their Doctrine, were as evident a Proof of the Truth of what they taught concerning his Resurrection and Ascending into Heaven, as if Christ had personally appeared to the World; nay, in some Sense more evident; for those hardened *Jews*, who should have seen Christ alive again, might have pretended to have seen his Apparition, and not his real Body, and so have verified our Saviour's Saying, that they would not *be persuaded, though one rose from the dead*: But the many wonderful Works, which were daily wrought by the Apostles, in the most publick Manner, in Testimony of the Doctrine of Christ's Resurrection and Ascension, were the most convincing Proofs of the Truth of their Doctrine; since thereby God himself did bear Witness to it. To illustrate this Matter a little farther: We know, that too many have mistaken Notions of the Existence, and the Perfections of God; neither do they worship Him suitable to his Being; and yet, to prevent those Evils, God does not think fitting to manifest Himself, after such a manner as perhaps some would fancy He might do; but having given Men the Faculties of Reasoning and Judging, He refers them to His glorious Works, the visible *things that are made*, whereby that which is *invisible* may be *understood*, or *known of God*; so the visible Confirmations of the Resurrection of Christ, in the Miracles wrought by the Publishers of it, were the most suitable for Conviction.

*Fifteenth Remark.* There is often mention made in the Gospel, and also in the *Acts*, of the  
Syna-

*Synagogues* of the *Jews*. The Word Synagogue strictly signifies a Place of *meeting together* for any Purpose; but among the *Jews*, some think (s) it was taken, (1st,) For the lesser Consistory, or Court of Justice appointed in each City (t), which had Power, by the Permission of the *Romans*, to judge and determine in divers Causes or Controversies between them, and to punish some Offenders, who belonged to such a Place or Synagogue, by scourging (u). Whence they apprehend, that Christ forewarned his Followers to *beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues* (x).

But (2dly,) Others understand the Term Synagogue, in the common Sense, to signify the Place of publick Worship, and that (y) our Saviour mentions the *Synagogues*, in which the Christians were to be scourged, as distinct Places from the *Councils*, to which they were to be delivered, and that the Scourging was wont to be actually inflicted in the Synagogue (z), where they assembled for Prayer and Praise; and there are Instances of that Practice in the Church Histories (a); and one of the ancient Fathers assigns a particular Reason for this Usage; viz. That the *Jews* did pretend, as it were, to offer a Sacrifice to the greater Glory and Praise

G 3 of

(s) Grotius and Lightf. in Matt. x. 17.

(t) As the Word *Συνάγωγα* is used in 1 Maccab. vii. 12.

(u) Lightf. Hor. in Matt. x. 17. and Cap. iv. 23.

(x) Matt. x. 17. 10 Chap. xxiii. 34. Acts xxii. 19. compare Deut. xxv. 1, 2, 3. and 2 Cor. xi. 24.

(y) In Matt. x.

(z) Dr. Whitby (from Campeg. Vitringa. de Regim. Syn. vel l. 3. Pars I. c. 11.) in Mark v. 22.

(a) Which Grotius cites in Matt. x. 17. from Epiphanius and Eusebius, though he understands the Text otherwise.

of God, by punishing the Apostles in the same Place, where religious Worship was wont to be performed (b); that is, in the Synagogues.

The Temple, which was but one in their whole Country (and that was at *Jerusalem*) was the proper Place of Divine Worship; thither the several Tribes were to go up, at least three Times a Year (at the Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles); there, and no where else, they offered Sacrifice, and performed the most solemn Offices of Religion (c).

But for the most common religious Performances at home (ever since their Return from the *Babylonian Captivity*) they had *Synagogues* dispersed up and down the whole Country (d), and in other Parts where they inhabited, if the Place could afford ten Persons who had Leisure and Capacities fit to attend the Affairs of the Synagogue, and study the Law; and whosoever lived where a Synagogue was, and did not join with the rest at the usual Times, was esteemed a bad Neighbour (e). In these Synagogues, they assembled three Times each Day (as hath been said above) (f) for Prayer and Praise, and reading and expounding the Law and the Prophets. Those Synagogue-Days (g) were the Sabbath, the second and fifth Day of each Week, answerable to our *Saturday, Monday, and Thursday*. In these Places some were *Rulers* of the Synagogues (h),  
that

(b) *St. Chrysost. in Matt. x. 17.*

(c) *A short Account of the Manner thereof is given in Part I. Chap. 9. in the Description of the Place of religious Worship under the Ceremonial Law; viz. the Tabernacle and Temple.*

(d) *Lightfoot Hor. in Matth. iv. 23. and Buxtorf. Synagog. Jud. c. 10.*

(e) *Lightfoot ibid.*

(f) *Remark X. on the Gospels, Numb. viii.*

(g) *Lightfoot ibid.*

(h) *Mark v. 22. Luke xiii. 14.*



that is, Presidents, Heads, or Masters, to whom belonged the chief Care thereof: There was also the *Chazan* (i) (Chanter or Reader) to repeat or sing the Prayers aloud, with whom the rest joined in a low Voice: He also, or some other called upon by him, expounded the Law to the Congregation. Offenders in some Cases were wont to be put out of the Synagogue (k), that is, excommunicated, or excluded from partaking, with the rest, in the publick Prayers, and religious Offices there performed (l); which Exclusion was esteemed scandalous, and the Person thereby reckoned as an *heathen man and a publican* (m).

*Sixteenth Remark.* To avoid Mistakes in reading of our Saviour's sending his Apostles, or other first Publishers of the Gospel, we are to observe, there were two Missions of them; the first was to the *Jews* only, who were *the children of the kingdom* (n), the peculiar People, and to whom the Promises especially belonged (o), and therefore the Gospel was first preached to them. The Apostles were not *then* to go either amongst the *Gentiles* or *Samaritans*, nor make any Provision either of *Gold* or *Silver*, or Change of *Coats*, &c. but depend entirely upon their Master's Providence. Their Commission was to publish among the *Jews*, that *the kingdom of heaven*, the Time of the Messiah, was at hand; and therefore, that they should believe in Christ, and receive him as such. The Apostles were also to work Miracles,

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in

(i) See Remark X. on the Gospels, Num. iii.

(k) John ix. 22.

(l) Leo Modena, Part II. 5.

(m) Matth. xviii. 17.

(n) Matth. viii. 12.

(o) Rom. ix. 4.

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in confirmation of their Doctrine; and as they had *freely received* from Christ the Gift of Miracles (of Healing the Sick, and Casting out Devils, &c.) they should *freely give* the Benefit thereof to others (*p*). When the Apostles had compleated this Mission, they gave their Lord an Account of it (*q*). Their second Mission was after Christ's Resurrection (*r*), and in this none were excluded, but they were to *go and teach all nations, Jews and Gentiles*, without Exception of any, and to be *Witnesses unto him, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth* (*s*). The latter Part of our Saviour's Instruction and Charge (*t*), seems (*u*) most to respect this their second Commission.

*Seventeenth Remark.* This Expression, *The coming of Christ, or the coming of the Son of Man*, very often in the Gospels signifies his coming to execute that terrible Judgment of the *Jews*, spoken of before (*x*), and making the *Romans* the Instruments thereof; and sometimes, his Coming to Judgment at the End of the World. The greatest Part of *Matth. xxiv. Mark xiii. and of Luke xxi.* contains Christ's Prophecy concerning the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the Temple, and the dismal Things which then were to befall the *Jews* (*y*); which he foretold at that Time, when the *Jews* were in a flourishing State, and had no Cause

(*p*) For this first Mission see *Matt. x. 5 to 16. Mark vi. 7, &c. Luke ix. 1, &c.*

(*q*) *Luke ix. 10.*

(*r*) *Matth. xxviii. 19.*

(*s*) *Acts i. 8.*

(*t*) From *Matth. x. 16, &c.*

(*u*) Grotius in *Matth. x. 16.*

(*x*) In *Part I. Chap. 22.*

(*y*) Grotius, Hammond, and Lightfoot in loc. compared with Dr. Wells's Paraphrase of the Chapter.

Cause for such Apprehensions, near forty Years before the Accomplishment. How much of those Chapters last mentioned relates to the Destruction of the *Jews*, and how much to the last Day of Judgment, is not plainly evident; because that Destruction of the *Jews*, and the dreadful Burnings of the City and Temple, was a Representation of the last Day of Judgment, therefore some think that Christ there speaks promiscuously of both: So that some Things are to be understood of the Destruction of the *Jews*, and others of the last Day. But the Words(z), *Verily I say unto you, this Generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled*, (like those, (a) *Verily I say unto you, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom*) seem fully to demonstrate, that all before-mentioned was to be accomplished, whilst some Men of that Age lived (as the Expression, *This Generation*, is used to signify by the same Evangelist) (b). What follows (c) may relate to the last Judgment Day, or *the End of the World*, concerning which the Disciples enquired, as well as of the Destruction of the Temple (d). Those Things which Christ foretold (e), concerning the Destruction of the *Jews* by the *Romans*, were fully made good; as *Josephus* a *Jewish* Writer, who lived at the same Time, largely shews (f); and that so exactly, as if the Historian had taken his Measures, as much from our Lord's Prediction, as from the Event; as an ancient Christian Writer observes (g), *Whosoever does compare the Words*  
of

(z) *Matth.* xxiv. 34.

(a) *Chap.* xvi. 28.

(b) *Ch.* xi. 16. and xvi. 4.

(c) From the 35th Verse.

(d) *Ver.* 3.

(e) From the Beginning of the Chapter to the 35th Verse.

(f) *Of the Wars, Book 5, 6, 7. of this at large in Part. I. Chap. 22.*

(g) *Euseb. Hist.* l. 3. c. 7.



of Christ, with the Relations of Josephus, of the War, he cannot but with Admiration confess the divine, and most admirable Prescience and Prediction of our Saviour. The aforesaid Josephus (g) assures us, that there were unusual Rumours of Wars, dreadful Famines, and Pestilence, and Earthquakes, fearful Sights, and great Signs from Heaven, many false Prophets, and false Christs arose, and deceived many; at length, the holy Place, the City of Jerusalem, was besieged by the Abomination of Desolation, that is, the Roman Army, so called, because the Soldiers were Idolaters, and had the Image of Caesar, and, for their Ensign, the Eagle, the Jews abominating all Images. In short, the Jews were the Carcasses; the Romans, by reason of their Ensign, were the Eagles to devour them. This great Tribulation, such as was not from the Beginning, Christ describes in the Language (h) of the Prophet Joel (i), which his Disciples, being Jews, were accustomed to, and understood in the figurative Sense; viz. by the Sun and the Moon being darkened, and the Stars falling, &c. thereby signifying an utter Dissolution and Destruction. Lastly, Before this Judgment was fully executed, the Gospel was published, Christ having sent his Angels, or Messengers, the Apostles, with the Trumpet of the Gospel, to gather his Elect, among the Jews and Gentiles, in the several Parts of the World (k).

(g) Joseph. *ibid.*

(h) See the Fifth Remark on the Prophets, in Part I. and Grot. in loc.

(i) Chap. ii. 30.

(k) See Lightfoot Hor. in Matth. xxiv. 31.

CHAP. IV.

**T**HUS much for the General Remarks, in order to the better Understanding of the holy Gospels. As for the *Contents of them*, we are chiefly taught in these Books; First, How our Redemption was accomplished, and what Christ hath done and suffered, and thereby procured for us. Secondly, What he expects as the Conditions on our Parts. Thirdly, What his own Example was, that he gave us of an holy Life.

*First*, We are taught in these Books, *How our Redemption was accomplished*; namely, that when the Fulness of Time was come, the Son of God took our Nature upon him, being conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin *Mary*; that his Birth was manifested both to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and first to the *Jewish* Shepherds, by an Angel from Heaven, a Multitude of the heavenly Host, or Angels, praising God for it, and saying, *Glory be to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men*; that he was called, by the Angel's Appointment, *Jesus*, which signifies a Saviour, because he was to save Mankind; that he was circumcised in Obedience to the Law, and being presented in the Temple, was, by a prophetick Spirit, in *Simeon* and *Anna*, one of each Sex, declared to be the *Christ*, or *Messiah*, before all the People; that his Birth was manifested a second Time, *viz.* to the *Gentiles*, in the Persons of the wise Men, who lived Eastward of *Judea* (a), and who being used to contemplate the  
Heavens,

(a) *Probably in Arabia, whose Inhabitants were esteemed by the Jews, the Men of the East, or the Eastern People, Jer. xlix. 28. Pocock Specimen Hist. Arab. Edit. Oxon. 1650. p. 34. So the ancient Christians, Vid, Grot. in Matth. ii. 1.*

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Heavens, were guided by an extraordinary Star (a proper Type of that Light, which he was to bring to the *Gentile* World). These came to adore Him, as the Messiah, or Great King, which was then expected to appear by the *Jews*; from whom the neighbouring Eastern People might learn the same. (This guiding those wise Men, who were *Gentiles*, by a Star, is called by the Church the *Epiphany*, or Manifestation of Christ to the *Gentiles*). This occasioned *Herod's* Jealousy, and Resolution to destroy him; but he was (by an Order from God in a Dream to *Joseph*) conveyed into *Egypt*; whence, by the like Order, he was conveyed back, after the Death of *Herod*.

At twelve Years of Age, he manifested extraordinary Wisdom, in hearing and propounding Questions to the Learned Doctors of the *Jews*. After this, we have no Account of him, except his living with, and being subject to his reputed Father *Joseph*, and *Mary* his Mother; and growing in Favour with God and Man; and following the Employment of a Carpenter (*b*) till he was about thirty Years of Age (*c*). Then we read, that his Forerunner, *John the Baptist*, who, though not the very Person of *Elias* (as Himself owns he was not) (*d*), yet was the *Messenger* that should take upon Him the Office of the promised *Elias* (according to the Prophecies) (*e*), proclaimed his Approach, making thereby as it were the Beginning (*f*) of the Gospel State (*g*), and prepared  
the

(*b*) Justin Martyr says, in making Ploughs and Yokes, Tryph. p. 270. Compare Grot. in Matth. xiii. 55.

(*c*) Luke iii. 23. (*d*) John i. 21.

(*e*) Isa. xl. 3, 4. Mal. iii. 1. and iv. 5. (*f*) Luke xvi. 16.

(*g*) Quasi non & nos limitem quendam agnoscamus Johannem constitutum inter vetera & nova; ad quem desineret Judæismus, & à quo inciperet Christianismus. Tertull. adv. Marc. l. 4. §. 33.



the People to receive him, by *preaching Repentance* (that their Sins might not render them unfit for the new State of the Gospel) and *baptizing* the Penitents (since Baptism was used by the *Jews*, as one Method of admitting Profelytes into their Church). When our Lord was baptized, the Heavens were opened unto Him (probably with a bright Shining) and the Holy Ghost came down in a visible Shape like a Dove upon him; and he was declared before a great Multitude of People, who resorted to *John*, by a Voice from Heaven, to be the Son of God; whereby He was, as it were, installed into his Ministerial Function, and receiving the Unction, or Anointing of the Holy Ghost.

From that time He solemnly took upon Him the prophetical Office, and entered on the great Work of our Redemption; and first of all, He was carried into the Wilderness or Defart, where He fasted forty Days (as *Moses* and *Elias*, the Types of Him, were formerly enabled to do) and being assaulted by the Devil, He overcame all his Temptations. Afterwards he went up and down the Country of the *Jews*, testifying the Approach of the Gospel-State, or *the Kingdom of Heaven*, declaring the Love of his Father, teaching his holy Will, and giving an Example of Piety and Charity; with assured Promises of unspeakable and eternal Glory and Bliss, unto all those who believe in Him, and live according to his Doctrine; and severe Threatnings of eternal Misery unto those who do not: He comforted the Penitent, and encouraged them to come to him for Ease of the Burden of their Sins; he confirmed the Truth of his being the Messiah and the Son of God, by fulfilling the old Prophecies, and  
by

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by working Miracles, as Raising the Dead, Healing the Sick, and Casting out Devils.

He chose twelve Apostles (which Word *Apostles* signifies Messengers, or Persons sent) their proper and peculiar Office being to be *Witnesses* of what he did and said (*b*), and to *publish* the same afterward to the World (*i*), and also to *found* or establish his Church on Earth, and to *settle an Order* of Bishops and Pastors to succeed them in the Government, and instructing of the same (*k*). (*l*) He chose Twelve to be his Apostles, according to the Number of the twelve Tribes of *Israel*, most probably that the Founders of the Christian Church might be of the same Number with those that founded the *Jewish*: And they were mean Persons, as Fishermen, neither Learned nor Noble, and so were the least prejudiced, and the more apt to embrace the naked Truth, and the less liable to Suspicion of inventing and forming a new Sect and Scheme of Religion; but chiefly by their mean Descent and Education it appeared, that they were enabled to preach and work Miracles by the *Power of God*, and the Assistance of the Divine Spirit (God having chosen *the foolish and weak things of the world to confound the wise, and things that are mighty*). Farther, he foretold his own Sufferings, Death, and Resurrection; and that his Gospel should prevail over the World; and that the *Jews*, with their City *Jerusalem* and the Temple, should be shortly destroyed.

When he had near finished the Work he had to do on Earth, and the Time was approaching for his Passion, he made a Publick and Kingly Entrance

(*b*) *Acts* i. 8. (*i*) *Matt.* xxviii. 19.

(*k*) *John* xx. 21, 22. *Acts* xiv. 23. 2 *Tim.* ii. 2.

(*l*) See Casaubon, Exerc. 14. Ann. 32. *Num.* v.

trance into *Jerusalem* (as it was foretold he should do) riding on an *Afs*, great Numbers of People spreading their Garments in the Way, and otherwise honouring him as the Messiah, crying *Hosanna* to the Son of *David*; and then going into the Temple, with Authority, he drove out those who profaned it: The Evening before his Death, having given the necessary Encouragement and Promises of Comfort and Support to his Disciples, at the Celebration of the great Feast of the Passover, he ordained the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for our solemn Remembrance of his Passion, and as a Means whereby we receive the Benefit of it; and afterwards, having prayed to his heavenly Father (instead of escaping from them, as formerly he did, his *Hour* being now *come*) he went voluntarily into the Garden, where he foreknew some were lying in wait for him, there offering himself as a Lamb to be slain for the Sins of the World.

He suffered terrible Conflicts and Agonies, was treated with vile Indignities and blasphemous Scoffings, and was cruelly scourged, and at length, although pronounced innocent by the Governor, was condemned, and underwent, for our Sakes, the most bitter, painful, and shameful Death of the Cross; at which Time the Sun was eclipsed in an extraordinary Manner, it being at the Time of the Passover, which was kept when the Moon was fourteen Days old; so it was then Full Moon, when there happens no natural Eclipse, which is only caused by the New Moon's being placed between our Sight and the Sun: Then there was also as prodigious an Earthquake (*m*), so that the Graves of  
many

(*m*) Both which are taken notice of by the ancient *Astrologers* and *Historians*, Grot. in Matt. xxvii. 45. and Tertullian appealed to the Records of the Roman Empire for the Eclipse, Apolog. c. 21. Eum mundi casum relatum in Arcanis vestris habetis.



many Saints were opened, and thereby a Way was made to attend Him at his Resurrection; also, among other Prodigies, the Veil of the Temple (which separated the highest and most sacred Part of it from the rest) was rent in two, from the Top to the Bottom (which no doubt was a Token that God had put a Period to the Sacrifices and Ministrations hitherto performed there.)

He was buried, and rose again on the third Day after, and shewed himself to be alive at sundry Times for forty Days, often appearing to his Disciples; and at length, in a solemn Manner, with the Sign of *Breathing*, conferred on them the Apostolical and Ministerial Commission of publishing the Gospel, and establishing and governing his Church (*n*); and encouraged them with a Promise of sending down *the* (Gifts and Powers of the) *Holy Ghost* (which the next Book of the New Testament, *viz.* the *Acts* of the Apostles, acquaints us how he performed, as we shall find in the History thereof). In the mean time, they were to wait for the Coming of the Holy Spirit, which should comfort and teach them, and assist and support them in the Discharge of their Commission, to publish Salvation unto all Mankind, and to establish His Church on Earth: To which Purpose, He gave them a solemn Command to go up and down the World, and to preach the Gospel, *beginning at Jerusalem*, or first to the *Jews*, and then to the People of all Nations or Countries (whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*) and to admit them into his Church by the Sacrament of Baptism, and teach them to observe his Laws, promising to be with them and their Successors *unto the end of the world*; and lastly, he  
blessed

(*n*) See what is said on the second Chapter of the *Acts* of the Apostles, concerning the Effusion of the Holy Ghost.

blest them, and ascended into Heaven, there to be our *Mediator* with the Father, and to *prepare* a Place of Joy for us; in the mean time, governing his Church on Earth, with his holy Word and Spirit, till he should come again at the last Day to Judgment, and conduct us into the Kingdom of Glory, and eternal Life.

*Note,* That from Christ's Birth to his Manifestation of himself to the World, it was about thirty Years, and from thence it was three Years more to his Ascension into Heaven; so that he lived on Earth in the whole about thirty-three Years.

## CH A P. V.

### *The Condition on our Parts.*

2dly, **W**E are farther taught in the holy Gospels, that our Lord Jesus Christ, when he published his Love in dying for us, did also declare *the Condition* on our Parts; and which is, not only to believe that he was the Christ and the Saviour; but also to take him to be our Lord and King, and to live in Obedience to the Divine Laws (o); where we see that *every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire*; and that it is not enough to call Christ *Lord*, to own him as our Saviour, unless we also *do the will of his Father which is in heaven, &c.* Now, this heavenly Will Christ declares and explains in his Sermon on the Mount, *Matt. v, vi, vij.* and in divers other Places of the holy Gospel; which give us a true Notion of  
H the

(o) Read *Mat. vii. 19, 20, 21. xi. 28, 29, 30. and xvi. 17.*

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the Christian Religion; the Design of which is to raise our Souls above the sensual Pleasures of the Body, and the Delights of this lower World, and to beget in us an heavenly Temper, an inward Purity of Mind, and an entire Conformity to the Will of God. Here follows the Substance of Christ's Sermon.

I. (p) Our Lord pronounces divers Persons *blessed*, in Circumstances which the World has not such an Opinion of; as first, *The poor in spirit*, who from a Sense of their own Imperfection, are humble and lowly minded: *For theirs is the kingdom of heaven*, they are fitted to receive and entertain the Gospel of Christ, and are better qualified for, and have the better Title to the Grace and Assistance of the Holy Spirit here, and to Happiness hereafter. (This may be applied to those Poor in worldly Possessions (o), who, because poor on Earth, are the more zealous to attain Heaven). *Blessed are they that mourn*; by which we may understand, in the first Place, those that mourn for their spiritual State, their Want of true Holiness and Purity; and for their Sins, so as to hate and renounce them for the future, contrary to the Insensibility and Hardness of negligent and presumptuous Sinners. *For they shall be comforted*; by a reasonable Assurance that God accepts their Condition now in this World, and in the next will receive them to everlasting Joy. They are also blessed, who *mourn* in a Christian Manner under Afflictions, are patient and submissive when they are in a sorrowful State (seeing it is the Chastisement of God, who corrects, as a Father his Children, for their (q) Good).

*They*

(o) *Luke vi. 20.*  
7, &c.

(p) *Matt. v. 1. to Ver. 13.* (q) *Heb. xii.*



*They shall be comforted*, with frequent Refreshings and Supports of the Holy Spirit (r); and at length, be eternally comforted in Heaven, in proportion to their Sufferings on Earth (s). In the next Place, *Blessed are the meek*; the mild and gentle, who are of a calm and quiet Disposition; *for they shall inherit the earth*; enjoy Content and Quiet in their Minds, and so live as comfortably in the World as can be expected, whatever Portion they may have therein; and hereafter inherit *the new heaven, and the new earth*, which shall be revealed in God's due Time. Farther, *Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness*; desire earnestly, and as earnestly endeavour to obtain such Righteousness, whereby they may be approved of, and accepted by God (as Hunger and Thirst inclines us both to desire and endeavour to obtain what will satisfy). *For they shall be filled*, or satisfied therewith. Again, *Blessed are the merciful*; who are disposed in their Minds to have Pity on such as are in any Want or Trouble (whether in regard to the Body, or the Soul, or their worldly State) and actually express the same as Opportunity is offered; and are also apt to forgive Wrongs, and bear with Infirmities: *For they themselves shall obtain mercy* at the Hand of God. They are also *blessed*, who are not only outwardly religious, but *pure in heart*, whose Consciences do not accuse them of Love to any Sin, are free from Hypocrisy, and careful to keep their Minds (which are as clearly seen by God as the outward Actions) as free as possible from the Pollution of evil Thoughts and Desires. *They shall see God*, (who is a pure Mind or Spirit Himself)

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(r) 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5.  
xvi. 25. 2 Cor. iv. 17.

(s) John xvi. 20, 21, 22. Luke

self) they shall know his Divine Truths, and enjoy Him for ever (*t*). *Blessed also are the peace-makers*; who are of a peaceable Temper themselves (*u*), and easy to be reconciled; and are also ready to compose the Differences of others; *for they*, by reason of their Likeness to the God of Peace, *shall be called*, or owned as *the Children of God*, and have their Portion accordingly, of Grace here, and Happiness in Heaven. Lastly, They are *blessed, who are persecuted or reviled for righteousness sake*; who choose rather to suffer wrongfully out of Love to God, and for a good Conscience (either in respect to the Profession, or the Practice of true Religion) than to save themselves by a sinful Compliance. *For theirs is the kingdom of heaven*; they act as true Members of Christ's Church on Earth, and their Reward shall be great in Heaven.

II. (*x*) Christ teaches, that as it is the Virtue of *Salt* to season Food, and preserve it from Corruption; so it is the Office of the Pastors of his Church, and all other his Followers (according to their Places and Stations) to endeavour to *season* the Manners of Men, and keep them from the Corruption and Putrefaction of Sin, by their good Examples and Instructions, or any other Christian Methods; and to that Purpose, howsoever we are not to perform religious Actions, which are of a private Nature (such as *Prayers* in the Closet, some *Almsgiving*, private *Fasting*, &c.) in a publick Manner, to gain Applause to ourselves; yet the publick Actions and Behaviour of Christian Pastors and People should be to others,

as

(*t*) 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Psal. xxiv. 3, 4. (*u*) So *Pacificus* is a peaceable minded Man, as well as a Peace-maker. See Grot. in loc. (*x*) Matt. v. 13, to 17.

as a *Light* and Encouragement to *good Works*, and thereby a Means to bring *Glory* to God (as by a religious Behaviour in the publick Worship of God, by Temperance, Sobriety, Chastity, Justice, and Fairness in our Dealings, Humility, Meekness, Charity, living in Love, and doing Good to others, &c.) since by reason of our holy Profession, we must expect to be taken notice of, as a *city set on a hill*, and we should be as a *Candle on a Candlestick*, that giveth light unto all that are in the house.

III. (y) That no Christian may fancy himself freed from the Observance of any moral Duty, which God had enjoined of old; Christ declares, that he came *not to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill*; and that not only by fulfilling what was typified and foretold, but also by explaining the full Sense and spiritual Importance of the moral Laws; and chiefly in Opposition to the false Interpretations put upon them by the Scribes and Pharisees: We are not therefore to allow ourselves in a wilful Neglect of what may be esteemed the *least* of God's *Commandments*; much less teach others to do so too (as the Scribes and Pharisees did by their Misinterpretations, and in other Respects) seeing that Neglect is an opposing God's Authority, who gave such as are esteemed the least Commandments, as well as those which are greater; and so far are we from being made easier in the Observation of God's Laws, by our becoming Christians, that we are to take care, that our *righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and pharisees* of old, who considered chiefly the bare Ceremonials of Religion,

H 3

and

(y) *Matt. v. 17, to Ver. 21.*



and the external Acts, with a Neglect of the substantial Parts of Judgment, Mercy, and Truth ; but we are to practise according to these last mentioned in the first Place, though not to leave the other undone : We are also to exceed those Scribes and Pharisees, by not only complying with the bodily Service, as they mostly did, but the spiritual, as being the great Design and Intention of the Law ; and not only being solicitous, like them, to avoid any open and known Breach of the Divine Laws, but also the lower Degrees of Sin ; suppressing all the evil Motions and Desires of the Heart, and shunning all Occasions, Inducements, or Temptations to Impiety ; otherwise we *shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.* As in the following Instances.

IV. (2) We are not only to avoid *Killing* or Murder ; but also rash, unjust, and revengeful *Anger* and Rage ; all disdainful Scoffing (expressed among the *Jews* by the Term *Raca*) and all bitter Railings and Reproachings, such as *Thou fool* imports ; and also all Uncharitableness, Envy, and Variance ; inasmuch, that if our Christian *Brother hath aught against us*, can justly charge us with any Injury or Wrong done to him by us, in his Person, Goods, or good Name, we are to *reconcile* our selves to him, and make him all reasonable Satisfaction that lies in our Power, before we can expect that God should accept our spiritual *Gifts* and Sacrifices of Prayer and Praise, &c. (because till that Satisfaction be made, we still continue to be injurious, and so do not leave the Sin, nor consequently truly repent, without which God will not accept us). And this *Agreement* and Reconciliation with an *Adversary* is to be made *quickly,*

(2) *Matt. v. 21, to 27.*

quickly, lest the present Opportunity be lost, and the Suffering be without Remedy, and endless.

V. (a) We are not only to be free from *Adultery*, but we are also to suppress any inward Motion tending thereto, occasioned by lustful and wanton *Looks, plucking out the eye, and cutting off the hand*, which causes to offend; that is, cutting off the Occasion of Sin; rather denying ourselves the Use of our Eyes, at such a Time, than that they should ensnare us in Sin by intemperate Gazing. For, if there were no other Way to avoid the being tempted, it were better to lose not only the Use of these Members of the Body, but even the very Members themselves, and thereby escape *Hell*, and obtain Heaven. We are also not to give Occasion for Adultery in a Wife, by *putting her away*, because we are angry or dislike her (as the *Jews* were permitted to do) thereby causing her to commit Adultery, either by exposing her to the Temptation of Incontinency, or of marrying another in her proper Husband's Life-time, contrary to the first Institution of Marriage.

VI. (b) We are not only to avoid Perjury, but also profane and common *Swearing* (as the *Jews* were wont to swear by *Heaven, the Earth, Jerusalem, &c.* which was all one as swearing by God himself, by reason of the Relation those Things have to Him. They would also swear by their *Head*, but that too is God's, and no Man hath Power to make the least Change in it) but we should, in our *Communication*, or ordinary Discourse, plainly affirm or deny, as the Matter requires; for whatsoever is more than such, *yea, yea, and nay, nay*, or a plain Affirmation or Denial,

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(a) *Matt. v. 27, to 33.*

(b) *Matt. v. 33, to 38.*

nial, *cometh of evil*, from evil Causes, as Dishonesty, Falseness to one's Word, &c.

VII. (c) However, among the *Jews*, the Judges were, upon Complaint made to them, to punish for the Loss of an *Eye*, or a *Tooth*, by inflicting the like Punishment upon him that did the Wrong (d). Yet, as private Persons, Christians should be easy to be reconciled, and *not resist Evil*, or seek to have a Person, who may have done him Harm, to be punished in the same Manner; but patiently endure Affronts, nay, *turn the other Cheek*, and part with a *Coat or Cloak*; that is, rather bear Injuries, and venture farther Wrong, than oppose Violence in such manner as the *Jews* did, much less, out of a Spirit of Revenge, and for the gratifying of Hatred and Ill-will, *recompence evil for evil* (b). Neither should we scornfully turn away from him who truly needs, and asks our Kindness, but we must chearfully succour him, by giving or lending.

VIII. (e) We are (in Opposition to the Doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees) to forgive Enemies, and *do good* for evil; which is *perfect Charity*; for so God, by vouchsafing the *Sun* and *Rain* to the *Good* and *Evil* too, behaves Himself towards us; but if we restrain our Love and Favour to them only who *love* us, which even *Publicans*, the worst of Men, do, we can expect no *Reward* of God: But our Charity must be *perfect*, as our heavenly Father is.

IX. (f) When we give *Alms*, or *pray*, or *fast*; we are not to do those good Works, in a more publick Manner than their Nature requires, and

(b) *Rom. xii. 17.* (c) *Matt. v. 38, to 43.* (d) *Deut. xix. 18, &c.* (e) *Matt. v. 43. to the End.* (f) *Matt. vi. 1, to 9. and 16th Verse to 19.*



and thereby chiefly seek to be observed and praised of Men, as the hypocritical Pharisees were wont to do; but to approve our selves to God; and although we are to *continue instant*, or be frequent and much in Prayer, so long as we are also attentive and devout; yet we are not to *use vain Repetitions*, or needless multiplying of Words (as they (g) who *cried from morning till noon, O Baal, bear us*) as if God were ignorant of our Wants, or slow of Apprehension, or absent for the present Time, &c. whereas the true God *knoweth what Things we have need of*, and is inclined to do us good, on Condition of our Dependance on Him, and devoutest Prayers to Him.

As to one Particular here mentioned, viz. *Fasting*, we may observe, that Christ supposes it a Duty, though he does not expressly enjoin it, by condemning some Abuse of it: So that, when Fasting tends to the humbling and afflicting our selves, in Detestation of Sin; or to the restraining our sinful Appetites, and rendering us more devout and attentive to spiritual and heavenly Affairs; then it is a necessary and religious Duty; although the Time and Manner, and other Circumstances of private Fasting, depend on its being conducive to those Ends and Purposes.

X. (b) We are to use devoutly the Lord's Prayer, which Himself hath taught us; and be as ready to be reconciled to others, as we ask Forgiveness at God's Hands.

(g) In 1 Kings xviii. 26. (b) Matt. vi. 9, to 16.

*A short Exposition of the Lord's Prayer.*

**O**UR (i) *Father*, and therefore most inclined to do us good.

*Which art in Heaven*; who rulest on high over all, and so art most *able* to relieve us.

*Hallowed (k) be thy Name*: May thy glorious Majesty be above all Things honoured and glorified (l); and whatever more immediately relates to thee, be suitably regarded, by us and all the World.

*Thy Kingdom come (m)*: Make all the World *subject* to thy Son Christ by the Gospel; rule in our Hearts by thy Grace, and hasten thy Kingdom of *Glory*.

*Thy Will be done*; by our Obedience to thy Commands, and *Submission* to all thy Pleasure.

*In Earth as it is in Heaven*; (though not so perfectly, yet as near as may be) with that *Readiness* and *Constancy* as by the Angels in Heaven.

*Give us this Day our daily Bread*: Give, and bless to our Use, the Necessaries of this Life, from Time to Time.

*And forgive us our Trespases, as we forgive them that trespass against us*. Pardon our Sins past, as we are prone to Mercy and Forgiveness towards one another.

*And*

(i) See Remark x: on the Gospel aforegoing, Numb. xiv.

(k) Hallowed here signifies acknowledged or accounted Holy; and thereupon our having a due Reverence and Veneration for God, and whatever more relates immediately to Him.

(l) The Name of God signifies himself, and what relates to him, Psal. xx. 1. See the First General Rule for understanding the Scripture, Numb. xx. (in Part I. Chap. 9.)

(m) The Kingdom of the Messiah. See the Second General Remark aforegoing on the Gospels.

*And lead us not into Temptation :* For the Time to come, suffer (n) us not to be ensnared by Temptations again to Sin.

*But deliver us from Evil :* From the Devil and Sin, and from all Evil and Mischief, from thy Wrath, and from everlasting Damnation.

*For thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory, for Ever and Ever :* All which, we beg of thee, for thou art our King, and the Power belongs to thee, and therefore all Glory be to thee for evermore. *Amen*, so be it, good Lord.

This short Prayer, we see, contains the Substance of what we need ask of God, both for our Souls and Bodies, for this World and that which is to come : It was made by Christ himself, and therefore it is the *best*, the *most perfect*, and *spiritual* Prayer, the *safest* for us to use, and the most *acceptable* to God, when we pray to him in the Words of his beloved Son. This Prayer may be often in a Day repeated by us, and that not only in the Chamber, but when we are walking, or riding ; in the Shop, or in the Field : For it is Christ's Command (o), *That Men ought always* (or constantly) *to pray, and not to faint*, or be weary of this Duty. But as we are to prefer this excellent Divine Form of Prayer, and use it frequently ; so we may also use other more large and special Forms, both of publick and private Devotion, since there are so many particular Occasions for the same.

XI. To proceed (p); Great Care must be taken, that, however we are to abide in our lawful Callings, and may improve as well our earthly as heavenly

(n) See the First General Rule for interpreting the Scripture, Num. xxi. in Part I. Chap. 1. §. 9.

(o) Luke xviii. 1.

(p) Matt. vi. 19, to 25.



venly Talents, so far as is consistent with the Duties of Christianity ; and also are to be thankful for all Conveniencies of this Life ; yet that we are not to be most solicitous for the laying up *earthly Treasures*, which are so fading and subject to Casualties, but those which are *heavenly* and eternal : For *where our chief treasure is, there will our heart be also*. To this Purpose, as we take Care of *the Eye, the Light of the Body*, seeing if it be faulty, the other Members of the Body cannot duly perform their Offices ; so we should take the best Care we can, that the Eye of the Soul, the Understanding and Judgment, be rightly informed ; both in the Excellency of spiritual and heavenly Things, and also in the Value and Use of the earthly ; lest our whole Desires and Endeavours be after the latter, to the Neglect of the only real Treasures in Heaven. For we *cannot serve*, or cleave to, *God and Mammon* ; that is, God and the World both together, no more than one can *serve two Masters*, whose Wills are contrary to each other ; God requiring us to love Him with all our Hearts, to place our chiefest Confidence in his Power and Goodness, to set our Affections on Things above, and attend most to the Business of Religion, Justice, and Charity ; all which the World would keep us from.

XII. There (*p*) is no Cause why we should be too *thoughtful* and solicitous, or immoderately concerned for the Things of this Life ; such Anxiety is inconsistent with a firm Belief of the Goodness and Providence of God, and betrays a Distrust of both : It is God who gave us *Life* and a *Body* ; and therefore will not deny us the lesser Benefits of Food and Raiment, which are necessary

(*p*) *Matt. vi. 25, to the End.*

cessary to preserve them : It is God who supports all the meaner Creatures, the *Fowls* and Plants, according to their Natures ; and sure he will not neglect us. Besides, we, who cannot *add one Cubit* to our *Height* or *Stature*, cannot with all our Sollicitude provide for our selves without God's Blessing ; which the *Gentiles* have not such Notions of, and Dependance on, as we have, and therefore they are more sollicitous in seeking after earthly Things : But our *heavenly Father knoweth*, what is most needful and best for us. Not but that we are to do our Duty in our lawful Callings, but our first and chief Aim should be to secure our Interest in *the kingdom of God* (the Redemption of Christ, and the Joys of Heaven) and for that End, to please and serve God, and then rest on his Power and Goodness for all necessary Things of this Life : So that there is no Pretence for too much Thoughtfulness and distrustful Uneasiness *for to-morrow*, or the Time to come ; the Evil or Trouble of each Day may be enough, without adding to it, by our being troubled before-hand.

XIII. (q) We should not rashly censure, *judge*, and *condemn* others (for example, either from uncertain Reports, taking Words and Notions in the worse Sense, making no Allowance for their Ignorance, Inadvertency, or being surprized ; or determining of them from any Calamity which befalls them, through the Providence of God, in this World) ; for by such rash judging, we shall bring upon our selves the Judgment of God : But we ought first to examine and reform ourselves ; and when we have *cast the beam out of our own eye*, have amended our own greater Faults, at least that may be so in God's Account (such as Pride  
and

(q) *Matt. vii. 1, to 7.*

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and Arrogance, Envy and Malice, Self-Conceit and Hypocrisy, being encouraged by unworthy Motives to good Actions, &c.) then we are the better fitted to pull the *mote out of our brother's eye*, to advise others to amend theirs. As for the Stubborn and Incorrigible, we are to leave them to God; for it is in vain to bestow our holy Advice on such *Dogs*, or *cast our Pearls before such Swine*; who usually *trample them under their feet*; do not profit by our Kindness, but rather *turn again*, and mischief us.

XIV. (r) We ought to be constant and earnest in *asking*; that is, in Prayers and Devotions; God having mercifully declared that he will be prevailed upon by our Importunity, to grant us what he knows to be good for us; especially on our Prayers for *the Holy Spirit* His gracious Assistance in his Service; and to make us the less fearful in this Respect, our Lord appeals to our own Judgment of the Disposition of a *Father* to his Children; assuring us withal, that God our *heavenly Father* hath, much more than earthly Parents, a fatherly Kindness for us.

XV. (s) Seeing God so deals with us as a kind Father, we ought to be Followers of God, in our Dealings one with another; which we may do, by observing carefully the reasonable and excellent Rule our Lord hath given us (in all our Dealings, and in all Points of Justice and Charity, and in all Relations towards one another, as Parents, Children, Masters, Servants, &c.) viz. to *do unto others, as we would be content, and should esteem it fit and reasonable, they should do unto us*, in the like Case, if we were in their Place, and they

(r) *Matt. vii. 7, to Ver. 12.*

(s) *Matt. vii. 12, to 13, compared with Luke vi. 30, 31, 32.*



*The SACRED INTERPRETER.* III

they in ours ; for this is the Substance of our Duty one towards another, contained in *the law and the prophets*, or the Holy Scriptures (*t*).

XVI. (*u*) Notwithstanding the Difficulties of a good Life, we are nevertheless to *strive* to walk in the Path of Religion (which we may do through the Assistance and Grace of God, *to be* obtained by Prayer) though it may appear *strait* and *narrow* (by reason of our evil Inclinations, Customs, and Habits, or the Disappointments and Sufferings we may be exposed to) ; and although *few* in Comparison go that Way, because it *leads* to eternal Life ; on the other hand, we are by no means, at any time, to run with the Multitude into the Way of Impiety, though it seems *broad* (most agreeable to our Natural Tempers and vicious Inclinations) and although *many* go that Way, because it leads to Hell and Destruction.

XVII. (*x*) We are moreover to take heed to ourselves, in our searching after the narrow Path of true Religion and Piety, lest we be seduced by *false Prophets* or Instructors, into any Error or sinful Practice. Such usually appear *in sheep's cloathing*, as very innocent and harmless (making great outward Shews of Holiness, Devotion, and Zeal for Religion, and give smooth Words) but *inwardly are ravening Wolves*, as being viciously disposed themselves, and having Designs upon those whom they deceive, making Advantage of them, and, which is worse, too often to their eternal Ruin ; but whatever be the outward Appearance

(*t*) That other Precept in Matt. xix. 19. *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*, may be explained in the same manner, as teaching us to place our selves in our Neighbour's stead, and to express that Degree of Love and Good-will towards him, as we might then expect from him.

(*u*) Matt. vii. 13, to 15. (*x*) Matt. vii. 15. to 21.

ance of such Seducers, we may *know them by their Fruits*; that is, not only their Manner of Life and Conversation (for they are said to come in Sheep's Cloathing, as pretendedly harmless and pious) but by the Fruits of their Doctrines, or those Practices which their Doctrines have a natural Tendency to promote and encourage: Forasmuch as it is inconsistent with the Nature of God to promote or encourage any Doctrine or Practice which is not morally good, or which is morally evil (which we may judge of by the Light of Reason, and the Revelation of God's Will in the Holy Scriptures). This Care is more especially to be taken, seeing, as it follows,

XVIII. (y) In order to our *entring into the kingdom of heaven*, it is not sufficient to make Profession of Christianity, saying unto Christ, *Lord, Lord*; that is, owning our selves the outward Members of his Church, and relying on him for Salvation; but we must also *do the Will* of God (by a conscientious Discharge of our Duties, as of the Worship and Service of God, and of Justice and Peace, and Charity towards Men, and Sobriety and Chastity in respect to our selves) and so far is this true, that although Men may have preached to others, and might have *the gift of prophecy*, and a Power of Working Miracles in Christ's Name, they may be disowned by Him at the last Day, for their Iniquity and Neglect of holy Living.

XIX. (z) Hence it is, that whosoever *heareth and doeth* the Will of God, is like unto a *house built upon a rock*. Amidst all the *Floods* and Storms of Temptations, Persecutions, or other Afflictions; and

(y) *Matt. vii. 21, to 24.*

(z) *Matt. vii. 24, to the End.*

and at the Time of Death, and the Day of Judgment ; he shall stand firm in God's Favour, and be happy for ever.

Thus much for Christ's Sermon. There are many other Lessons he has taught us, which are mentioned in several Parts of the Gospel ; such as these following.

(a) To be most afraid of offending God, who cannot only, as a Man, punish *the body*, but also destroy *both soul and body in hell*.

(b) To take heed lest the Cares of the World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches, *choak the Word* of God, which we have heard, and hinder us from bringing forth good Fruit.

(c) That seeing we expect Forgiveness of innumerable Sins at God's Hands, we must be inclined to *forgive one another*, and be reconciled, even until *Seventy times seven* ; that is, after many Provocations and Injuries.

(d) That the *Marriage Vow* is to be kept sacred ; because those two, the Husband and Wife, are by God united into one ; and that nothing but Falseness to the Bed, which is a Breaking of that Union, can justify a *Divorcement*.

(e) That it much concerns us, to be careful lest Riches hinder us from *entering into the kingdom of heaven* ; and to that Purpose, not to *trust in riches*, so as to place Confidence in, and to have too great Affection for them ; but rather *forsake all*, part with all our Wealth in the World, when God calls for it ; that is, when we cannot keep our Wealth and a good Conscience both together.

VOL. II.

I

That

(a) Matt. x. 28.

(b) Matt. xiii. 22.

(c) Matt. xviii. 21, &c. to the End, and Luke xvii. 34.

(d) Matt. xix. 5, &c. to Ver. 10.

(e) Matt. xix. 23, to the End of that Chapter, and Mark x. 24.



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(b) Matt. xiii. 22.

(c) Matt. xviii. 21, &c. to the End, and Luke xvii. 34.

(d) Matt. xix. 5, &c. to Ver. 10.

(e) Matt. xix. 23, to the End of that Chapter, and Mark x. 24.

(f) That Churches are not to be profaned, but used as the Houses of Prayer, consecrated to God's Honour and Worship.

(g) That we detain not what belongs to God for the Maintenance of his Glory and Service, nor be slack in paying Tribute or Taxes to Kings and Governors.

(h) That we love and serve the Lord our God very heartily and sincerely, with all our Affections, and above all other Things.

(i) That we should not be *vain-glorious*, hunting after Praises, and affecting honourable Places and Titles; nor like those whom the *Jews* called *Rabbies*, or Doctors, and *Masters*, who claimed Authority and Dominion over the Faith of others, according to their own Will, as their absolute Directors; but we should instruct each other according to the Doctrine which Christ, our only proper *Master*, hath established.

(k) That we should *watch*, and be on our Guard, lest Death summon us in an unprepared Condition.

(l) By the Parables of the *Ten Virgins*, and the *Talents*, Christ teaches us that we carefully use and improve the present Time and Opportunity for Religion, and the working out our Salvation, and not defer it till it be too late.

(m) That giving Meat and Drink to the *hungry and thirsty*, succouring the honest and distressed *Strangers*, cloathing the *Naked*, visiting and tending

- (f) *Matt. xxi. 12, 13.* (g) *Matt. xxii. 21.*  
 (h) *Matt. xxii. 37.* (i) *Matt. xxii. 5, to Ver. 13.*  
 (k) *Matt. xxiv. 42, to the end of that Chapter, and Mark xiii. 33, to the end of that Chapter.*  
 (l) *Matt. xxv. 1, to Ver. 31.*  
 (m) *Matt. xxv. 34, to Ver. 41. and Luke xiv. 12, to Ver. 15.*



tending the *Sick*, and relieving the poor *Prisoners*, are such good Works, as will be owned by Christ at the great Day of Judgment, as done to himself; and will entitle us to be invited with, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

(n) That the Sin of Omission in not relieving the Poor and Distressed, &c. will certainly bring on us the Wrath of God, shut us out from Heaven, and be the Occasion of our being condemned to the everlasting fire of Hell.

(o) That we celebrate the *Lord's Supper*, by a thankful Remembrance and Representation of Christ's Love in dying for us.

(p) From the Widow's *two mites*, Christ shews, that where there is a little, something must be bestowed in Charity; and that he will accept of Alms, according to the Ability of the Giver.

(q) That when we have *put our bands to the plow*, have engaged ourselves in the Service of Christ and his Church, or in a religious Course of Life in general; we take great Care that the Profits or Pleasures of the World may not call us off.

(r) By the Parable of the Man that fell among Thieves, Christ shews, that we must account any one as a Neighbour, whom we may be concerned with, as well as him that lives near us; and that we are to lay hold on every Opportunity of relieving those that need our Help.

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(s) That,

(n) *Matt. xxv. 41, to the end of that Chapter, and Luke xvi. 19, to the end of that Chapter.*

(o) *Matt. xxvi. 26, to Ver. 29. and Luke xxii. 19, to Ver. 21.*

(p) *Matt. xii. 41.* (q) *Luke ix. 62.* (r) *Luke x. 30, to Ver. 38.*

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(s) That, instead of the Pharisees cleansing of *cups and platters*, the giving Alms is the Christian way to *purify and cleanse* the rest of our Estates and Possessions from what may be hurtful in them.

(t) From the Parable of the *rich man*, whose Brains were contriving to build greater Barns, when that Night he was to die, and leave all; we are taught to be careful, that the Love of this vain World may not disappoint and befool us, to the Ruin of our Souls.

(u) When heavy Judgments befall others, not to censure them as greater Sinners than ourselves; but to look at home, and repent of our own Sins, lest we *also perish*.

(x) Christ, by his Acceptance of *Zaccheus's* Restitution, teaches us, that we must *restore* what has been unjustly gotten. The Reason is evident; because so long as, for want of Restitution, we keep what is of right another Man's, we still continue unjust; and so, by not forsaking the Sin, we cannot be true Penitents, and consequently have no Title to Forgiveness.

(y) Our Lord maketh it a peculiar Character of his Religion, that we *love one another, as he hath loved us*; which he calls a *new commandment*. Not but that the loving one another is a Branch of the Law of Nature, arising from our Inclination to Society; in which there can be neither Advantage nor Pleasure, without mutual Affection. Again; the Loving one another was a Precept of *Moses*, and that as one's own *self* (z). But then the *Jews* limited this to their own People; and had

(s) *Luke xi. 41.* (t) *Luke xii. 16.*

(u) *Luke xiii. 1, to Ver. 6.* (x) *Luke xix. 8, 9.*

(y) *John xiii. 34, 35.* (z) *Levit. xix. 18.*

had no Regard to others, who were not *Jews*, or Profelytes (a): Which occasioned the Lawyer's Question, *Who is my Neighbour* (b)? Whereas Christ extends the Command to all Persons one may be concerned with (bidding us to do as the *Samaritan*, a Stranger, did to the Man that *fell among thieves*) (c), nay, even unto *enemies* (d), and also proposes the Measure and Degree of Love, in a higher Manner than the *Jews* thought of; *as I have loved you*. Lastly, Christ might call this mutual Love a *new Commandment*, as having made it the proper Badge or Mark of the Christian Religion; thereby distinguishing his Followers from others. (e) *By this shall men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love to one another*.

(f) We must pray in the Name of Jesus Christ, so our Prayers shall be heard.

These, and other Discourses of our Lord, we should often seriously read; being well assured, that as holy Baptism has made us the Members of Christ, that is, Subjects of his Kingdom; so unless we behave ourselves as such, in avoiding what is forbidden, and doing what he commands, we shall lose all the Benefits of it.

## CHAP. VI.

### *Christ's own Example,*

3dly, **F**urthermore; As the holy Gospel gives us the Account of what our Lord Jesus Christ hath done and suffered, and of what he hath required of us to observe and do; so also,

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it

(a) Grotius in Matt. v. 43. Lightf. Hor. in Luke x. 29.

(b) Luke x. 29. (c) Luke x. 29, &c. (d) Matt. v. 44.

(e) Matt. xiii. 35. (f) John xiv. 13.



it acquaints us with our Lord's own *Example* and *Pattern*, which he hath given us, in the Time of his publick Manifestation of himself: Not, indeed, where his Acts were Demonstrations of his Divinity and Messiahship; as in his fasting forty Days, and forty Nights, &c. but according to his ordinary Conversation; as in the following Instances.

1<sup>st</sup>, By a due *Retirement from the World* sometimes, in order to our conversing with God, by Divine Meditations, and Devotion: Not by that Sort of Solitude, so much magnified in the Church of *Rome*, or an entire renouncing all manner of Conversation with the World; but by a mixture of religious Retirement, and the necessary, lawful Employments of this Life. For such was the Pattern our Lord set us. Sometimes we read of him, as resorting to Places of the greatest Concourse; *the Market-place*, and *Synagogues*, and *Feasts* (a). And sometimes he retired into a *Wilderness*, or *Garden*, for religious and heavenly Exercises (b), and particularly for *Prayer and Devotion in private*. (c) *When he had sent the Multitudes away, he went up into a Mountain apart to pray*. (d) *And it came to pass as he was alone praying*. And when the Day was taken up in teaching, and healing Diseases, &c. rather than Time should be wanting for his wonted Devotion; *In the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed* (e).

2<sup>dly</sup>, As for *publick Devotion*, his Custom was to repair to the *Synagogues*, where the publick Worship was wont to be performed (f), and to go

(a) *John v. 1, &c. Matt. iv. 23. John ii. 1, &c.*

(b) *Matt. iv. 1, &c. John xviii. 1, 2. (c) Matt. xiv. 23.*

(d) *Luke ix. 18. (e) Mark i. 35. (f) Luke iv. 16.*

go to *Jerusalem* to the Celebration of the great Feasts (g).

3dly, *Submission to the Will of his heavenly Father, and patience under all crosses and pains, and all manner of sufferings* (b). O my Father, if this cup (of Affliction) may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done.

4thly, *Peaceable subjection to the Government* where he lived ; infomuch, that *Pilate* having strictly examined him as to that Point (as it much concerned him to do, considering the Jealousy and Severity of his Master the Emperor *Tiberius*) and all the malicious Accusation of his Enemies, while they accused him of *perverting the nation, stirring up the people, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar* ; he was forced to declare, that he found no fault in Him, touching those things whereof they accused Him (i).

5thly, *Justice, in rendring to all their dues* ; so that, rather than the accustomed Tax should not be paid, and Offence given in that Respect, having no Money, he wrought a Miracle to procure it out of the Fishes Mouth (k).

6thly, *Love and Charity to all Persons, in every Place where he came ; going about, and doing all good Offices for them, and refusing to none at any time, what might tend to their well-being ; but doing good both to Mens Souls, in furthering their spiritual and eternal Happiness ; and to their Bodies, in relieving all that needed him ; teaching us thereby that heavenly Art of promoting the Welfare of each other* (l). A compassionate Affection, and Tender-heartedness towards all in

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their

(g) *John* v. 1. vii. 10. and x. 22. (b) *Matt.* xxvi. 39, 42.

(i) *Luke* xxiii. 14, 22. (k) *Matt.* xvii. 24, 27.

(l) *Matt.* ix. 35. *Acts* x. 38.

their Afflictions, and a Readiness to bring them Ease, is particularly exemplified to us in our Lord's Behaviour. (m) When he came nigh to the City *Nain*, there was a dead Man carried out, *the only son of his mother, and she was a widow* (two moving Circumstances): When our Lord saw her, he *had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not*; and having raised the young Man to Life, he *delivered him to his mother*. Much such another Example we have in Christ, of a good-natur'd, kind, and compassionate Inclination, and a real assisting the *distressed* (n). But above all, His Love and Charity was especially shewn in coming into the World, taking our Nature, and dying for us. This Example of his, himself urgeth us to follow, though not by any miraculous Operations, or in so high a Degree; yet to love and do good to each other, after such a Manner *as he hath loved us* (o).

7thly, *Humility, or Lowly-mindedness*; He being content to come into the World in a poor State, and as meanly to live in it; being laid in a Manger when first born, and esteemed afterwards no better than the Son of a poor Carpenter (p). This humble and lowly Disposition is at all Turns recommended to us, as a truly Christian one, by the Apostles, teaching us to be *cloathed with humility, and in lowliness of mind, each esteeming others better than ourselves*; and that upon this Principle, of *letting this mind be in us which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, yet made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant* (q).

8thly,

(m) *Luke vii. 11, &c.*

(n) *Mark viii. 1, to 10.*

(o) *John xiii. 34, 35.*

(p) *Mark vi. 3. and Luke ii. 7.*

(q) *1 Pet. v. 5. Phil. ii. 3, 5, 6, 7.*



8thly, *Meekness* ; in the midst of all the Sleights, Revilings, and Slanders of the Pharisees and others, though he could easily have revenged all their Affronts, and have commanded *fire from heaven*, as *Elias* did, and as his Disciples would have had him do ; yet he still behaved himself gently and mildly, checking his Disciples for their Haste and Passion, telling them, *Ye know not what spirit ye are of* ; and declaring, that He was *come to save, and not to destroy* (r). This heavenly Temper he also especially recommends to our *learning of Him*, who was, in all his Behaviour so *meek*, and lowly, and *gentle* Himself (s).

9thly, *Obedience to Parents* ; before he manifested himself to be the Son of God, he was *subject* to his supposed Father *Joseph*, and *Mary* his Mother after the Flesh (t).

10thly, *Contempt of the World*, its vain Profits and Pleasures, in comparison with the next. This Temper in Christ was a great Stumbling-block or Offence to the *Jews*, who expected the Messiah to appear with all the Pomp and Power of a great Prince, and to procure for them, together with Himself, the Enjoyment of all temporal Satisfaction and Prosperity ; whereas He accepted indeed the Assistance of those who *ministered unto Him* the Necessaries of Life where he abode ; and that was all the Share He had of this World for Himself and His Disciples ; calling upon us, in like manner, to come *after Him*, and *deny ourselves* (u).

11thly, *Forgiving Enemies*, and being *willing to be reconciled to them*, and *do them good* ; so Christ behaved himself towards his Enemies, and  
prayed

(r) *Luke ix. 54, 55, 56.* (s) *Matt. xi. 29.*

(t) *Luke ii. 51.* (u) *Matt. xvi. 24.*

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prayed for them too ; (x) *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

12thly, *Patient suffering for well doing* : He often met with no better Return, for all his Acts of Love to Mens Souls and Bodies, than Reproach and Contempt, being charged with having Assistance from *the Devil*, in the mighty Works he wrought, and with being a *Friend*, or Favourer of *Sinners* (y), and at last was rejected by the Multitude, who preferred a Thief and Murderer before Him (z), and then affronted, and derided, scourged, and crucified Him (a) : All which he endured with constant Patience. To the Imitation of which our heavenly Pattern, in doing well, and suffering for it, his Apostle tells us, *we are called, that we should follow his steps* (b).

*Lastly, Suffering wrongfully for a good conscience, and righteousness sake.* When he knew the *Jews* Intention to destroy him, he refused not to bear witness to the Truth ; viz. That he was *the Son of God*, and the *Messiah* ; though he also knew that Confession was what they waited for, in order to pronounce him *guilty of Blasphemy*, and consequently of *Death* (c) ; teaching us hereby, that whenever the Divine Providence shall put us to such a Trial, we also do, as our Lord and Master did, *witness a good Confession*, and persevere in the Truth ; and thereby, *take up our cross and follow Him*, as he calls upon us to do (d), that so, one Day, we may also follow Him to his Glory. Thus

(x) *Luke xxiii. 34.* (y) *Matt ix. 34. and xi. 19.*

(z) *Luke xxiii. 18, 19. and John xviii. 40.*

(a) *Matt. xxvii. 26, &c.* (b) *1 Pet. ii. 19, 20, 21.*

(c) *Matt. xxvi. 63, &c.* (as he afterwards did the same before Pilate, *John xviii. 30, to 38.*) (d) *Matt. xvi. 24.*

Thus our Lord hath given an Example of holy Living: And it is our Duty to imitate him, otherwise how are we his *Disciples*, or *Followers*; that is, Christians? To which Character, a bare Profession of his Religion, without following Him in Practice, cannot entitle us. And how *honourable* is it to do as the glorious Son of God did? What *Satisfaction* and *Comfort* must it be to feel in ourselves such a Temper as Christ had, to be employed as he was, to spend our Life in such a Manner as the blessed Jesus did his? And, as a farther Encouragement, to be sure we are *in the right*, and do *walk in the narrow Path*, when we follow Christ's Footsteps, in whom the Father was always well pleased. So great Reason had St. Paul to instruct every Member of the Christian Church (e), to *put on*, or imitate the Lord Jesus Christ; and St. John, (f) *He that saith, he abideth in Him* (Jesus Christ) *ought Himself to walk even as he walked.*

Thus far we have considered the chief *Contents* of the Gospel; namely, that it gives us an Account of *what Christ hath done and suffered for us*, in order to our eternal Life and Happiness; *What he expects as the Condition on our Parts*; and also, that it contains *the Example he hath given* us of the Performance of such Condition, by a true Christian Life.

(e) *Rom. xiii. 14.*      (f) *1 John ii. 6.*



## C H A P. VII.

*Practical Observations on the Gospels.*

FOR the more profitable Reading the Books of the New Testament, it may be convenient to add some *Practical Observations*, at the End of the Account given in each of those Books: These Observations are such as tend to advance *Piety*, and to prevent some *Mistakes* which are dangerous and pernicious. As to the four Gospels, the Observations are these following.

*First*, As we read any Part of the Gospel, we cannot but observe, What a Vein of Love and Kindness runs through all our Saviour's Words and Actions, both in respect to the Souls and Bodies of Mankind. For Instance, how kindly did he invite all that were heavy laden with the Burden of their Sins, or of their Sufferings, to come unto him for Ease and Comfort? How forward was he, in his Travels up and down, to heal Diseases, to restore Sight to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame, *Going about and doing good*? How patient, in bearing with the Sottishness and Unbelief of his Disciples, with the Malice of the Pharisees, and Ignorance of the People? With how passionate an Affection did he pray for his Disciples, and for all that should believe on him thro' their Words (*a*)? How full of Love was he even to his Crucifiers, praying his Father to *forgive them*, and even making an Excuse for them, that *they knew not what they did*? The very Miracles which he wrought to prove his Commission, and to evidence that he was the promised

*John xvii. 9, &c.*

mised Messiah, were such as might shew not only Power, but Goodness and Love ; by such Deeds as were most useful and beneficial to Men : It might have convinced the World of his Power, if he had caused a Mountain to move from Place to another ; but that would not have given them such Instances of his Love and Goodness, as Healing the Sick, Casting out Devils, and Raising the Dead to Life : And although he was often reviled and affronted, yet, to manifest himself to be the Saviour, not the Destroyer of Mankind, he cured all manner of Diseases, and raised the Dead ; but never inflicted any Disease, nor took away the Life of any Man.

Once more ; Christ's Forbearance of the *Jews*, for near forty Years after he forewarned them of the dreadful Judgments which hung over their Heads, is not the least Instance of his endearing Goodness and Love, in deferring their Destruction so long, and sending them his Apostles and Teachers, and adding wonderful Signs from Heaven, foreshewing what was about to befall them, unless they repented. These, and many other Instances we may observe of our Saviour's Love, and Tendernefs, and Good-will.

*Secondly*, That God chose such a Method of being reconciled to Sinners, as withal might vindicate the Honour of his Laws, and make us sensible of the Evil and Danger of Sin, and of his Love and Goodness. The Honour of his Laws is vindicated, and the Evil and Danger of Sin appears in that it was not to be forgiven without some Sacrifice and Expiation made for it ; and we are made sensible of the infinite Love and Goodness of God, when we find that he *spared not his*

*own*

*own Son, but delivered him up for us, to be our Saviour.*

*Thirdly,* When we read in the Gospel the History of our Redemption, in Christ's Life and Death, Resurrection and Ascension, and sending down the Holy Ghost; we may see how much was to be done, before we could be capable of Salvation. Therefore seriously ask yourself, What will become of me? *How shall I escape if I neglect so great salvation?*

*Fourthly,* We find in the Gospel that it is in vain to hope in Christ as our Saviour, unless we also take him for our Lord and King, by *avoiding* what he hath forbidden, and heartily and sincerely *observing* the Duties he hath taught, by his Precepts and Example. For it is evident, that (as God is a God of Holiness, as well as Mercy) one Design of Christ's Coming into the World was, to suppress all Sin and Vice; such as Injustice, Intemperance, Uncleaness, Prophaneness, and such like; and also Degrees of Impurity, which may not be so visible to the World, and yet as opposite to Holiness; such as Haughtiness and Pride, Passion, Envy and Malice, Ambition, Covetousness, Desire of Revenge, &c. and on the other hand, to make Men religious and virtuous, in the Practice of Piety, and Devotion, Humility, Patience, and Meekness, Sobriety, Chastity, Truth, Justice, Love, and Charity, whereby we may *adorn* that excellent Religion we profess, may *imitate*, and become the more like our heavenly Father; and so *be the more in his Favour* for the present (*b*); and be *disposed for the Relish* of those pure and spiritual

(*b*) See Just. Martyr. *Apol.* 1. §. 10. ad initium.



ritual Pleasures, which are to be in Heaven hereafter.

This appears from the whole Scope of the New Testament ; in particular from our Saviour's first Sermon (c), and his other Instructions, which have been largely spoken of before ; and also in that Discourse (d), where he assures all those, who can be *the Branches of the true Vine*, that they must be careful how they *bear Fruit*, and *keep his Commandments*, as ever they hope to *abide in his Love*. The same Doctrine the Apostles took care to settle on the Hearts of the new Converts to Christianity : Thus St. Paul (e) instructed them in this Design of Christianity ; *The grace of God that bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men, teaching us, how to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts ; and on the other hand, To live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world ;* and then we may with Comfort look for the glorious appearing of our Saviour : Forasmuch as he gave himself for us, yet not only to atone for the Guilt, but also to prevent the Practice of Sin, and to engage Men in a holy and religious Conversation, that he might *purify to himself a peculiar people zealous of good works* ; and those who neglect the Performance of this Condition of Salvation, or delay it so long as that they have neither due Time nor Ability to perform it, can have no other Foundation for their Hope, than the uncovenanted Mercies of God ; and presume as unreasonably in regard to their everlasting Concerns, as one that should slight all the Methods for securing of his temporal Estate, by the present settled Laws, and wholly rely upon other Laws to be made

(c) *Matt. v, vi, vii.* (d) *John xv. 1, &c.*

(e) *Titus ii. 12, 13, 14.*

made for the future, to confirm his Title, which yet may never be enacted.

There are indeed Promises in the New Testament, of Acceptance on condition of *Repentance, and Sorrow for Sin*: But, 1<sup>st</sup>, Many of these Promises respected those who were newly called to the Christian Religion; viz. the *Jews* and *Heathens*, as we shall farther see in the *Acts* of the Apostles. These were to be assured, that their former Sins would not exclude them from the New Covenant of Grace, made with Mankind in Christ Jesus, on condition they did repent of them, and forsake them; and no doubt, such of them who departed this Life, as far as they were baptized into Christ's Religion, upon their Sorrow for Sins committed, and renouncing them, and a sincere Purpose of obeying the Gospel for the future, were entitled to the Benefits thereof; as the Labourer was rewarded in the Parable of the Vineyard, who was not hired till the latter End of the Day. Hence St. Paul places the Doctrine of *Repentance from dead Works, and Faith towards God*, among the first Principles of the Christian Religion (*f*). But, 2<sup>dly</sup>, As for us, who are called into the Vineyard at the Beginning of the Day, who by Baptism are so early admitted to be the Members of Christ's Church, and make constant Profession of the Christian Religion; we are required to labour, to live according to our Profession, and that is, to renounce our Sins, and to bring forth Fruit in all holy and godly Conversation.

Thus

(*f*) Heb. vi. 1. Hence, in the Primitive Church, the Catechumens (or Catechizati) on their Faith and Repentance, even though not baptized, when prevented by Death, were esteemed to be entitled to the Merits of Christ. Firmiliani Epist. ad Cyprianum, Epist. 75. prope finem, Edit. Oxon. Augustinus de Baptismo, l. 4. c. 22.

Thus much is evident from the Epistles, of St. Paul especially, wherein he informs the first Christians, that they are now to be *dead to Sin*, to *put off the Old Man*, and to *put on the New Man*; that is, constantly to watch over themselves, and to resist the Temptations to their former Sins, and practise the Duties of Christianity. They who hope otherwise, must believe, that God sent his Son to give us an Example of an holy Life, and to teach the Practice of it, as we have seen, and yet that it will not signify much to those who rely on his Merits, whether that Example or Practice be followed or no, or be rendered altogether vain.

As for the Promises of Pardon, for Sins committed, or Omissions of Duty, made to professed Christians, on their *Repentance*; the great Thing to be enquired into, is, whether that Repentance be sincere or no; viz. such as is suitable to the Tenor of the Gospel; which consists in a present Sorrow, and inward Change of the Disposition; and not only so, but a hearty *Reformation*; and that, whilst Opportunity serves, and before the Season and Day is over. Such a Penitent may comfort and encourage himself with this of the Apostle (g), *If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins.*

Once more; it may be added here, that indeed in the New Testament, divers Promises are made to some particular Graces, or pious Actions: As, that *God is well pleased with the sacrifice of doing good* (h), that we thereby are *laying up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come* (i),

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That

(g) 1 John ii. 1, 2.

(h) Heb. xiii. 12.

(i) 1 Tim. vi. 18, 19.



That we are to *love one another*; for *love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God* (k): And that *hope maketh not ashamed* (l), and such like. But then, what we are to understand hereby, is this: That indeed, such a single Grace, or good Action, does in a peculiar manner recommend us to God; yet is not alone effectual for Salvation, unless in Conjunction with other Parts of Christian Piety. This ought to be seriously considered; for St. *James* fully shews (m), that to fail, or *offend* knowingly or wilfully, even in *one point*, is to be *guilty of all*; and consequently, one Grace, or holy Action, cannot make Reparation for a wilful Omission or Neglect in other Branches of our Duty; much less for an Indulgence in any sinful Course. So that, in short, doing good, and loving our Neighbour, &c. are Duties very acceptable to God, and have a particular Promise of Pardon of Sins annexed to the Performance of them, and shall be particularly regarded at the last Day (n), which certainly is a vast Encouragement. But they are not to be depended on singly by themselves, with a Neglect of other Parts of Christian Behaviour: But where there is in general a *Conversation as it becometh the Gospel of Christ*, or a sincere, true *Repentance and Reformation*, Charity, and loving others, as being Godlike Qualities, have especial Promises of Acceptance, and of Reward in Heaven.

Farther: The holy Gospel teaches us, that it is not sufficient for us to *abstain* from Debauchery and Vices; such as Adultery, Drunkenness, Lying, Cheating, and such like; unless we also *perform* the Duties which the Gospel requires: For, besides  
what

(k) 1 *John* iv. 7. *Rom.* v. 5. (l) *Rom.* v. 5.  
(m) *James* ii. 10. (n) *Matth.* xxv. 14, &c.

what hath been already mentioned, Christ hath not only declared against the *Commission* of Sins, but hath also forewarned us of the Danger of the *Omission* of Duties ; and observes to us, that not only *the tree which bringeth forth evil*, or hurtful Fruit, but that which *bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire* (o). And in the Parable of the Talents, he is that *wicked servant*, to be *cast into outer darkness*, not who abused his Lord's Talent, for he hid it in the Earth ; but who did not use and improve it, was *slothful and unfitable* (p). And in the Account he gives us of the Day of Judgment, he shews (q), that those who neglect the Works of Charity, shall be sentenced to *everlasting fire*. Lastly, The Gospel not only requires the Performance of virtuous *Actions*, but likewise a Watchfulness over the *inward Motions* of the Heart (r).

Here it may be requisite to mention the grand Principles, or Springs of Piety (both in Mind and Practice) set forth in the Gospel ; viz. The *Love and Fear of God* (s), and *the Contempt of the World* (t). The *Love of God*, as he is the chiefest Good in himself, and the Fountain of all the Good which we do, or can enjoy, either in this Life, or in the Life to come : And the *Fear of God*, who is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell. This Fearing of God is very consistent with our Loving him ; viz. as a dutiful Son loves and reverences his Parent, and, at the same time fears to offend him, lest he lose his Favour, and incur his Displeasure.

K 2

As

(o) Matt. vii. (p) Matt. xxv. (q) Matt. xxv. 41, 42, &c.

(r) Luke vi. 45. (s) Matt. xxii. 37. and x. 28.

(t) Luke xii. 15, to 22. Matt. xvi. 24. to 27.

As for *the World* ; what is to be expected from it, beyond the present Necessaries of Life ? Not entire Satisfaction ; for the Experience of Mankind proves the contrary, and forces a Confession, one Time or other, that all therein is Vanity. Neither can Lands, or Money, remove the Trouble of Mind, or Infirmary of Body : And at best, how short and uncertain are worldly Treasures and Felicities ? So that nothing would more tend to advance Religion, according to the Principles laid down in the Gospel, than a serious Contemplation on the Perfections and Benevolence of God, to induce us to love and please him ; and on his Justice and Power, whereby we may be afraid to offend him ; as also on the Insufficiency and Uncertainty of worldly Satisfaction, to wean us from them, and to make us *set our Affections on things above.*

*Fifthly,* Every Person, in order to Salvation by Christ, ought not only to believe the Gospel, renounce the Sins forbidden, and observe the Duties contained in it ; but he must also become an outward Member of Christ's Church, make Profession of the Christian Religion, and serve God in the publick Assemblies (*u*), and be Partaker of the holy Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper ; which Christ hath ordained to derive the inward and spiritual Grace unto us, and to which he hath annexed the Conveyance thereof ; *viz.* of that Remission of Sins, and that Reconciliation which he purchased by his Death and Sufferings, in that he hath made the holy Sacraments the ordinary Means whereby to convey an Interest in his Merits unto us ; though not by any Power in those Means themselves, yet by virtue of his Institution  
and

(*u*) *Matt.* xviii. 20. compared with *Acts* ii. 1. *Heb.* x. 25.



and Appointment, and by the Power of his Holy Spirit, moving and working in, and by, those Means, upon all such as have suitable Dispositions, and use them aright: As appears in respect to both the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (x). So that although it be one Design of the Gospel, to teach Men not to place Religion chiefly in the Performance of outward Rites (such as *Moses* taught the *Jews*) but in the Purity of the Heart, and a holy Life; worshipping the Father *in spirit and truth*; yet Christ hath thought fit to ordain a few plain and visible Rites (as Baptism and the Lord's Supper) whereby Men should be admitted into the visible Society of his Church, and become Partakers of the spiritual Benefits thereof; which therefore by no means are to be neglected, but reverently, devoutly, and thankfully to be used.

Nor ought it to be pretended, that because the Gospel requires inward Purity, therefore the external Ordinances were only *for a season*, and the Obligation to them now ceases; forasmuch as we find nothing in Scripture concerning their being only Temporary, and there is rather more Reason for the Continuance of them, than at their first Institution, when the miraculous and sanctifying Graces of the Spirit were so evident and common. So that, without being a visible Member of the Church of Christ, and making open Profession of Christianity, frequenting the publick Assemblies, and partaking of the holy Sacraments, the Gospel hath not promised us Salvation by Christ. Where indeed these Things are not in our Power, there

K 3

we

(x) *Matt.* xxviii. 19. *John* iii. 5. *Matt.* xxvi. 26, &c. compared with *Acts* ii. 41, 42. *1 Cor.* xii. 12, 13. and Chap. x. 16, 17.

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we may reasonably hope God will accept the Will and Resolution ; for he hath not bound up himself to his own Ordinances ; but hath made them absolutely necessary as to us, when it is possible for us to observe them.

This ought to be well considered by all such who content themselves with a Belief of the Gospel, and, it may be, a moral Conversation, but wilfully neglect the formentioned Ordinances of Christ.

*Sixthly*, Every true Christian must be ready and resolved before-hand, rather to suffer, than disown Christ and his Gospel ; or do, or consent to any thing against the Rules thereof ; since our Lord declares (y), *If any man will come after me, or be my Disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.*

*Seventhly*, We may do well sometimes to reflect on the *Reasonableness* and *Perfection* of the Religion which Christ hath established (z) ; such as in the first Place agrees with the Reason of Mankind ; which teaches us to reverence and love God, the Author of our Being, and of all our Enjoyments, and to express our inward Reverence and Love of Him by outward Worship and Adoration, to testify our Dependance on Him by Prayers, and also to acknowledge our Obligations to Him by Praises and Thanksgivings. The Christian Religion does also teach us the best Methods for the Government of ourselves, in order to our temporal  
Ease,

(y) *Matt. xvi. 24.* (z) *This is at large illustrated by Dr. Hammond, in his Reasonableness of the Christian Religion, Chap. 4. and Archbishop Tillotson's Sermon V. Vol. I. in Phil. v. 8.*

Ease, Health and Happiness, by Purity, Chastity, Moderation, and Temperance ; the contrary Vices whereto are unnatural, unreasonable, and unhealthful : And likewise Christianity is available to establish true Holiness, by teaching us how to purify our Souls from the Dross and Filth of sensual Delights, that provoke to Covetousness, Intemperance, and Lust ; which indispose a Man for the Contemplation of Things Spiritual and Divine. Farther, the Religion which Christ hath taught the World, does also tend to the Peace and Happiness of human Society ; than which End nothing can be devised more proper, by enjoining Love one to another, Meekness, Justice, and Charity. Lastly, This Religion furnishes us with the best Motives to Patience and Contentedness, under the Evils and Afflictions of this Life, by propounding to us the Example of the Son of God, and the Glory and Reward with which we shall be recompensed for ever.

Nor does the Practice of the Christian Religion deprive us of our temporal Interests and Satisfaction ; it does not oblige us to resist our natural Appetites, but the Corruptions of them : Every Man may enjoy the Comforts of this Life, provided he does not, for the Sake thereof, unqualify himself for those of the Life to come ; which being so abundantly more excellent and eternal ; it is his greatest Interest, as well as Happiness, to secure ; as it would prove his greatest Unhappiness to forfeit them, for what is so momentary and uncertain in this World. O ! How *excellent is the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord !* And how happy are we, and shall be, if we *do those things which we know*, so much tending to our present, future, and eternal Good !



*Eighthly*, One Branch of the New Covenant, under the Gospel Dispensation, is the blessed (z) Operation of the *Holy Spirit*; which being forfeited by our first Parents Transgression, was graciously renewed by the Promise of the Messiah, the *seed of the woman*; and afforded to the Prophets, and other holy Persons under the Legal Dispensation; as it is now under the Gospel, by which Spirit we are regenerate, or *born again of Water and of the Spirit* (a). This is explained by the Apostle (b), viz. that Christ hath *saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit*: The Sum of which is, that Sin having corrupted our Nature, whereby our Wills and Affections are inclined to Evil, ever since the Fall of our first Parents, we are therefore said to be *born in sin*, and to become the *children of wrath*, or subject to the Wrath of God: But in our Baptism, by virtue of Christ's Institution, and the Power and Influence of the Holy Spirit (which always accompanies his Ordinances) we are entered into a State of Regeneration, or are spiritually new-born, are taken into Covenant with God, and have an Interest in the sanctifying Graces of his Spirit, in order to Holiness and Salvation. Now, the Gifts and Operations of the Spirit, expressed in Scripture, are twofold; the one Sort *miraculous*, and peculiar to the Apostles, and first Christians; such as Speaking with New Tongues, Healing Diseases, Interpreting the Types and Prophecies of the Old Testament, &c. for the Planting and Propagating the Gospel at the Beginning, as we shall see afterwards. The other spiritual  
 Gifts

(z) Dr. Clagget has, among others, largely treated of this Subject, in his Operations of the Holy Spirit. (a) *John* iii 5.  
 (b) *Tit.* iii. 5.

Gifts are such as are *to continue* in the Church. The former, we find by Experience, are ceased ; and therefore it is a gross and dangerous Mistake in such, who confound those two Sorts of Gifts, and support their Pretences to the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, by Promises peculiar to the Apostles and first Christians. As for the latter Sort of spiritual Gifts and Assistances, which are *to continue* in the Church, these are promised on our Prayers (c), and do both confirm a Person in the State of Regeneration or Grace, and keep him so, except he *resist* and *quench* the Spirit ; that is, either by *refusing* to do that Good to which he finds himself to be strongly moved by his inward Workings and Persuasions ; or *proceeding presumptuously* in any evil Course, notwithstanding the Checks and Reproofs he feels within him.

The distinct peculiar *Manner*, how the Spirit worketh in us, is not revealed, and therefore is not to be known by us ; some have endeavoured to explain it, by God's raising such and such Ideas in our Brains, or making (d) such Impressions on our Minds ; for we cannot conceive him to have less Power than he hath given to Man, who can utter his Mind in such Manner, as to be apprehended by another ; so God, who is a Spirit, can speak to the Spirits and Minds of Men, as Men can to the Ear : But this we may be sure of, that His Spirit worketh in us, in a Way suitable to that reasonable Nature which God hath given us, and to those Faculties of the Mind, and that Freedom of Choice, with which he hath endued us, as by inclining, convincing, persuading, &c. which is the Method the same Spirit hath used, as we find

(c) Luke xi. 13. (d) See the first Part, Chap. 1. §. 4. concerning Inspiration in general, towards the End of that Section.

find in Scripture; viz. by Arguments and Motives to convince and persuade. There may be those who are more suddenly and powerfully wrought upon than others; and they may know when and where they perceived a very extraordinary and strong Impression on their Minds; which they may, not without just Cause, believe to be the Operation of the Spirit of God in their Hearts: But doubtless, there are many, who by means of a happy Education, in Conjunction with the Grace and Spirit of God, and an early religious Conversation, with a constant Progress therein, though they cannot point out the Time and Place of any such particular extraordinary Impression on their Minds; yet are truly regenerate, and led by the Spirit, and frequently feel the gracious Influences thereof. The *Effects* of a new Birth, and the Operations of the Spirit, are discerned by the holy Dispositions wrought thereby on our Minds; for *he worketh in us both to will and to do, of his good pleasure (e)*. So we are said to be *led by the Spirit of God (f)*. Nay, that we are *the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in us (g)*; that is, as the *Shechinah*, or Glory and bright Shining, under the *Jewish* State, dwelt or resided in the Temple of the *Jews*, as a Testimony of God's Presence with them to protect and govern them. But then we are to guard against *Enthusiasm*; that is, the vain Pretence of too many, who mistake the idle Imaginations of their own Brains, for the Dictates of the Spirit: Nevertheless, their false Notions of the Spirit ought not to discountenance our Apprehensions of the true ones; no more than we should allow that there is no sound Principle of Law

(e) *Phil.* ii. 13.  
iii. 16.

(f) *Rom.* xviii. 14.

(g) *1 Cor.*



Law or Physick, because of so many Pretenders or Quacks in both.

The *true Mark*, whereby we may distinguish our own vain Imaginations, or the Suggestions of the Devil, from the Dictates of the Holy Spirit (in which we are to be careful) is the Tendency of the Motion or Suggestion in our Minds ; *viz.* That it does not clash with any Ordinance or Appointment prescribed in the Holy Scriptures, which has been revealed by the *same* Spirit ; but is exactly conformable thereunto, both as to our Profession and Practice, and prompts and encourages us to the promoting of God's Glory, and the Discharge of our Duties, or upbraids us with the contrary ; and also, at the same Time, works in our Hearts Humility in respect to ourselves, and Charity for others ; that in *lowliness of mind*, we may esteem others better than ourselves ; and checks all spiritual Pride, Self-Conceit, and Disobedience to Government in Church or State ; making us endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. By these Marks we may prove our inward Motions : But without such Examination and Proofs, too many wofully mistake the foolish and impious Suggestions in their own Minds (too often the Work of the Devil) for the true Light and Guiding of the Spirit of God.

The secret and gracious Motions of the Holy Spirit in our Minds, are to be diligently attended to ; being sometimes vouchsafed for the enlightening our Understanding of the holy Scriptures, and our Christian Privileges and Duties, and for our Encouragement therein (*b*) ; at other Times, for supporting and filling our Hearts with Contentment,

(*b*) Eph. i. 17, 18. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

tentment, and Chearfulness in Trouble (*i*). One while, checking us for any Vice or Neglect (*k*); at another Time, creating in us a secret Pleasure and Satisfaction on our Performance of an holy Duty (*l*), raising more or less inward Fervour, and spiritual Joy in Prayer (*m*), and frequently solacing the Soul with a Sense of God's Favour, and with a lively Hope of future Salvation (*n*). And as we are to observe, and rejoice in those happy Operations of the Holy Spirit (as knowing, that the Soul can no more live the Life of Righteousness without them, than the Body can live naturally without Food and Cloathing) so we are to be on our Parts careful that we may continue to enjoy them: But that we are not like to do, if we suffer the Love of this World to seize our Affections; for then we shall either be so drawn away with alluring sinful Pleasures, or hurried with earthly Affairs, that we shall forfeit those Divine Comforts and Succours, and drive the Spirit from us: But the Person, whom God takes into his special Care, is he, who keeps himself *disentangled from the Snares of the World, and burns with Desire after the Love of the Lord*; and with a stedfast Faith, and lively Hope, lives in Expectance of the heavenly Treasures. To this Purpose, the ancient Author cited in the Note, and lately translated into our own Language (*o*), is worth the Perusal of every pious Person; by the frequent Reading of, and Meditation thereon, he will soon find himself to be of that devout Father's Mind; *viz.* (in his own Words) "The Promises made to us Christians are great, and beyond Expression; infinitely much,

(*i*) 2 Cor. i. 3, 4, 5.      (*k*) Gal. v. 16.      (*l*) Psal. xl. 8.  
 (*m*) Eph. vi. 18.      (*n*) Rom. v. 5. and viii. 16, 17. Psal. li. 12.  
 (*o*) *The Spiritual Homilies of Macarius the Egyptian.*

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“ much, that all the Glory and Beauty of Hea-  
“ ven and Earth, with all the remaining Furni-  
“ ture and Variety, Riches, Splendor, and De-  
“ light of the visible Creation, bear no Propor-  
“ tion to the Faith and Treasure of one single  
“ Soul.” And therefore, since our heavenly Fa-  
ther has graciously promised the sanctifying Gifts  
of *the Holy Spirit to them that ask him*; we shall  
do well to ask the same, by the frequent Use of  
that excellent Collect of our Church; *O Lord,*  
*from whom all good things do come, grant to us,*  
*thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we*  
*may think those things that be good, and by thy mer-*  
*ciful guidance may perform the same, through our*  
*Lord Jesus Christ.* Amen (p).

Ninthly, That severe Sentence, that *the blas-*  
*phemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven*, was  
occasioned by the Blasphemy of the Pharisees, affirm-  
ing, that Christ wrought his Miracles by *the prince*  
*of the devils* (q). Whereupon Christ declared (r),  
that although their blasphemous Words against  
him might be forgiven, yet whosoever should blas-  
pheme the Holy Ghost (whose Power now ap-  
peared by the Works they saw, and who was to  
be sent down amongst them in a more ample  
Manner afterward) which was the last Dispensa-  
tion that God would vouchsafe for their Convic-  
tion, and affirm the wonderful Operations, to be  
wrought by the Apostles and others, through the  
Assistance of the Divine Spirit, in Testimony of  
Christ, to be the Work of an evil Spirit, thereby  
opposing and reproaching the Goodness and Power  
of the Spirit of God in effecting them, this Sin  
should

(p) *Fifth Sunday after Easter.*  
(r) *Ver. 31.*

(q) *Matt. xii. 24.*



should not be forgiven: So that no one who believes in Jesus Christ can be guilty of this Sin, but he who blasphemously affirms, that the miraculous Effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, after Christ's Ascension into Heaven, and the wonderful Works wrought in Testimony of Christ's being the Messiah and Saviour, were the Works of the Devil; and thereupon rejects the Christian Religion, and the Evidence thereof in the holy Scriptures: Such resist their last Remedy (*s*), and oppose the best and utmost Means of their Conviction; because such miraculous Works are the utmost Evidence that can be given to the Truth of any Religion, and, as hath been said, is the last Dispensation which God vouchsafes for Conviction.

*Tenthly*, As it is the common Right of all Societies, to censure and exclude any disorderly Member from the common Privileges, without which Fundamental Power they cannot subsist; and as in the *Jewish* Church, there was the Exercise of spiritual Censures, to terrify Evil-Doers, prevent Infection by evil Examples, and to bring Offenders to Amendment; and thereby to maintain the Credit and Power of Religion, by Excommunication, or Exclusion from sacred Offices (*t*); so that it was the universal Sense of the Ancients (*u*), agreeable to

(*s*) *Camero inter criticos sacros ad loc.* Alloquitur dominus Phariseos, qui *patris* œconomiam, quæ ante Christi adventum vigeat, insuper habuerunt; *suam* item blasphemantes spreverant. Ait ergo, licet œconomias illas, quamdiu duraverere, contempserint; esse tamen spem veniæ, sub *tertiâ*, quæ spiritui sancto tribuitur; sancti vero spiritus œconomiam si prosequantur odio, sublatam esse omnem veniæ spem, qui quarta œconomia minimè expectari debeat.

(*t*) *John ix. 22.*

(*u*) *Hammond of the Power of the Keys, Chap. 4. Cave's Primitive Christianity, Part III. Chap. 5.*

to their constant Practice, from the Beginning of Christianity, that Christ committed unto the Apostles, and in them to the Bishops and Pastors of the Church, to the End of the World, an Authority to establish a Church ; and for the Government thereof, a Power of exercising Church-Discipline, or of *Binding or Loosing*, of Excommunication and Absolution, for the Ends and Purposes above-mentioned (there being like to be always the same Reason for Discipline) and also, that Christ assured the same to them, by that sacred Symbol from his own Mouth (x), *He breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost ; whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them ; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained ;* and that on this Principle, that as God himself is the *Author* of Reconciliation, so he hath appointed his Ministers to confirm the same as *Stewards commission'd* by Him ; as when a King sends Governors over Provinces, he gives them Power of *Imprisoning and Releasing* ; according to the Similitude of one of the Ancients (y). We may add here the Remark of an eminent Prelate of our Church to this Purpose : “ *That Act of Ministry* “ *is not ineffectual, which God hath promised shall* “ *be ratified in Heaven, and that Authority is* “ *not contemptible, which the holy Jesus con-* “ *veyed by breathing upon his Church the Holy* “ *Ghost* (z).

Eleventhly,

(x) *John xx. 22, 23.* (y) Chrysost. in *John xx. 23.*  
(z) *Bishop Taylor's Life of Christ, Part III. and §. 16. Compare Dr. Wells's Paraphrase on 1 Cor. v. And it ought not to be pleaded, that the Power of Remission of Sins in the Apostles was extraordinary, and for a Time, as was that of Miracles ; because the Church stands as much in need of it now, as in their Days.*

*Eleventhly*, The Pretence of the Papists, that the Bishop of *Rome*, the Pope, as being the Successor of *St. Peter*, is the visible Head of the whole Christian Church on Earth, and that, whatsoever Body of Christians do not submit to him as such, are no Members of the Catholick Church, is ill founded on *Matt. xvi. 18, 19. Thou art Peter*; that is, a Stone or Rock (for so the Name signifies) *and upon this rock will I build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it; and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, &c (a).*

For this Text does not give to *Peter* any peculiar Authority over the rest of the Apostles, because they were all of them *Rocks* and *Foundations* of the Church, and had all the same Commission given them, and the same Power of *Feeding*, or *Teaching* the Church, as Pastors of it, of *Binding and Loosing*, of *Remitting and Retaining Sins*, or the Power of the Keys; as the following Texts fully shew (*b*). And therefore, their Pretence that the Apostles were made Foundations of the Church in a different Manner; that is, *St. Peter* as the ordinary Pastor, and the rest only as Ambassadors, is contrary to Scripture; and whatsoever our Saviour intended by that figurative Expression, this is certain, that the *Rock*, or real Foundation, on which the Christian Church is built, or the *chief corner Stone*, is, according to *St. Peter's* Confession, *Jesus Christ (c)*. But the first Person instrumental in building on this Foundation was *St. Peter*, first among the *Jews (d)*, then among the *Gentiles*.

(a) Catech. ad Parochos, Pars I. in Artic. Symbol. 9.

(b) *Eph. ii. 20. Rev. xxi. 14. Matt. xxviii. 16, &c. John xx. 23.*

(c) *Eph. ii. 20. Which is the Rock many of the ancient Fathers mean.* Forbesius *Instructiones, Hist. Theol. l. 15. c. 7,*

*8, 9. (d) Acts ii. 14, 38, 41.*



*Gentiles* (e). This Matter of Fact may explain (f) our Saviour's Promise to *Peter*, even supposing He means, by *this Rock*, the Person of *Peter*; but no Superiority or Power, or any Jurisdiction over the rest of the Apostles, or the whole Christian Church, can be hence inferred; much less the Succession of the Bishops of *Rome* in such an Authority, any more than of those of *Antioch*, or any other Place where St. *Peter* preached or resided.

It is also evident, that the other Apostles did not, either from these Words of Christ to *Peter*, or from any other Cause, acknowledge any superior Power in St. *Peter*; but acted without Difference of Respect or Regard to him, more than to each other; as appears particularly in the Case concerning the *Gentile* Converts Obligation to the *Mosaic* Law (g). So far were the Christians from appealing to St. *Peter*, as the Judge in such Cases, that they sent to the *Apostles and Elders* in general (h), among whom the Case was discussed, and at length determined; not by *Peter*, but *James*: *Wherefore my Sentence is*, &c (i). Upon which it pleased (not *Peter* only, or as Principal, but) *the Apostles and Elders*, to send chosen men to *Antioch*, with their Resolution (k). *Peter* is indeed called the *first*, in reckoning up the twelve Apostles (l); that is, in Order, not Dignity, or Power: And the natural Fervour and Eagerness of his Temper, occasion'd that his Forwardness in speaking (m). Lastly, The plain Matter of Fact

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is

(e) *Acts* x. 44, &c. (f) *Casaubon Exercit.* 15. An. 33: Num. 17. §. 14. p. 366, &c. *Camerarius apud Pool.* *Hammond and Whitby* in *Matt.* xvi. 18. (g) *Acts* xv. (h) *Ver.* 2. (i) *Ver.* 19. (k) *Ver.* 23. (l) *Matt.* x. 2. (m) *Casaubon Exercit.* 16. An. 34. Num. 64. §. 61. p. 519.

is this : The Supremacy of the Pope, which the Church of *Rome* now challenges, was unknown for six hundred Years, and then by Degrees obtained in the *Western* Church, not on the Account of Christ's Appointment, but the *Dignity* of the Church and Bishop of *Rome*, which was the Imperial City (*m*).

*Twelfthly*, Those unhappy Persons, who being loth to quit their sinful Pleasures, would fain comfort themselves, that so good a God will not punish them for ever, for the Sins of a short Time, do bes fool and deceive themselves, in hoping to avoid what God hath so solemnly threatened, and Christ has so mercifully forewarned them of (as well as died to hinder) the *going away into everlasting punishment* (*n*). Which is opposed there to the *life eternal* (*o*) of the Righteous ; and therefore is to be understood to be as truly eternal, the one as the other ; and the Threatening is altogether as positive as the Promise (*p*).

As for proportioning the Time of Punishment with that of the Commission of the Fact ; what Law is there, which does not consider the Nature and Heinousness of the Fact ; not the longer or shorter Space in which it was committed ? God offers to our *Choice* the Joys of Heaven ; and that on Condition of a gracious Yoke, and a reasonable Service ; in which he is pleased to afford the Assistance of his Spirit, and Word, and Sacraments :

(*m*) Irenæus, *l. 3. c. 3.* & Not. Grabij *ibid.* *Bishop Stillingfleet's Vindication of Archbishop Laud, Part II Ch. 6. §. 11, 12* *Dr. Cave's Government of the Ancient Church, and Dr. Geddes's Tracts, Vol. II.* (*n*) *Matt. xxv. 46.* (*o*) *Εἰς κόλασιν αἰώνιον, εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον.* (*p*) *Just. Martyr. Apol. 1. §. 12, and 66. & Trypho, Edit. Jebb, p. 131.*

ments : And *the everlasting fire* was prepared for *the Devil and his Angels*. So that if, after all Means of Salvation being afforded, any one should wilfully chuse the Devil's Work, and unhappy Share, the Fault is in himself. As one short Act of Lust often ruins a Man's Health for his whole Life, which is his *Ever* in this World ; and yet he cannot blame God for it, or expect he should deliver him by a Miracle. Nor are we to separate the Divine Attributes of Mercy and Justice. In a Word ; since God has promised everlasting Happiness on Condition of our Obedience, and has threatened everlasting Punishment for the want of it ; it seems to be his *Intention*, that we should believe them both to be alike everlasting ; and that we should make this Use of the Promise and Threatening ; *viz.* to consider, and endeavour how to escape the Punishment, and enjoy the Happiness. *Which God grant.*

*Thus much for the Holy Gospels.*

## C H A P. VIII.

### *The ACTS of the Apostles.*

THE next Book of the New Testament is the *Acts of the Apostles* ; which gives us an Account of propagating the Christian Faith and Religion throughout the World, after Christ's Ascension into Heaven, by the Apostles and their Assistants. This Book was also wrote by (q) St. Luke, the same who was mention'd before to have

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wrote

(q) Irenæus, *l.* 3. *c.* 14. Dr. Mills's *Prolegom.* p. 13, 14.  
Dr. Whitby's *Preface to the Acts, about the End.*



wrote one of the Gospels (which he calls *the former Treatise*) and who was a constant Attendant of St. Paul, whose Actions he chiefly describes, as being an Eye-witness to most of them. This History, from the Beginning, was received into the Canon of holy Scripture, as (r) appears from some of the most ancient Fathers of the Church. For the better understanding this Account in the *Acts*, of the first Settlement of Christianity, we may make the following *Remarks*.

*First Remark.* The Employment of publishing the Gospel, was in itself very difficult and hazardous. The Apostles were wont, not only to convert Persons of all Countries and Religions; but directly to oppose those Opinions and Practices, which the whole World, both of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, had for many Ages been educated in, and with the greatest Obstinacy received, and been accustomed to. They were now to cry down the Necessity of the Ceremonial Observations of the *Jews*, as being only Shadows of Christ the Substance; and to *change the Customs which Moses delivered* to them, and which they and their Forefathers for so many Generations had received, and were so zealously concerned for (s). They were also to oppose the *Heathens*, who were hardened in their Errors and Debauches, and even thought their Gods were more honour'd by their Sensuality (t). Being thus to contest with the strong Prejudices and Passions of all Sorts of Men, they had need of being *endued with power from on high*; as we shall find they were, in the Sequel of this History;

(r) Ibid.  
xxii. 22, 23.  
Venus, &c.

(s) See *Acts* vi. 13, 14. xxi. 20, 21. and  
(t) *As in the Solemnities of Cybele, Bacchus,*

History ; which if they had not been well assured of, it is not conceivable they should have attempted to preach the Gospel.

*Second Remark.* At the Time of publishing the Gospel, the whole World was drown'd in Impiety, and fallen into all manner of abominable Sins. The *Heathens* were all very sensible of their Danger on this Account: Witness the Sacrifices, wherewith they hoped to have appeased their angry Deities. The *Jews* had Sacrifices for Sins of Ignorance, and smaller Transgressions; but the greater Sins, as Idolatry, Murder, Adultery, &c. were punished by Death; and there was no Provision made in the Law, to save such Sinners (u). Besides, their Legal Sacrifices were only Types and Shadows of some more effectual one that was to come.

This being the State of the World; the Apostles had a Commission, with full Power to invite all into the Christian Church; that on Condition of Faith in Christ, Repentance, and Reformation for the future, they might be baptized, and made Members thereof, and obtain Remission of Sins, in all Cases whatsoever. So (x) *Be it known unto you, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* But they were also to declare, that howsoever God was pleased to wink at the former times of ignorance; yet now, since he hath given assurance to all men, that Christ is the Saviour, he will be their Judge: In that *he hath raised him*  
L 3 *from*

(u) Num. xxxv. 31. Levit. xx. 10.  
38, 39.

(x) Acts xiii.

*from the dead, he hath, on their Peril, commanded all men every where to repent (y).*

*Third Remark.* The Obstinacy of the *Jews*, and their Unbelief, was very much aggravated after Christ's Resurrection, and his Mission of the Holy Ghost. Those Prejudices, which their whole Nation had entertain'd against his Person and Doctrine, though very unreasonable, as hath been shewn (z) before, were yet an Occasion of their Unbelief. They knew that their Law was at first established by Signs and Wonders from Heaven, under *Moses*; and they expected that the Messiah should be a Glorious Temporal King, and triumphantly subdue all Nations under them; as we have seen before in the Gospels. Now that their Law, given by God to their great Master *Moses*, and confirmed by so many Signs and Wonders, was to give place to another Dispensation; that they knew *Jesus* of *Nazareth* to be meanly descended and born; and that, instead of glorious Triumphs and Conquests, and a temporal Kingdom, they heard him declare, *his kingdom was not of this world*; and saw him crucified, dead, and buried, whereas they expected their Messiah should *abide for ever*; this made them to be *offended*. But on the other hand, when, besides the Miracles Christ himself wrought, in Healing the Sick, Raising the Dead, and Casting out Devils, he was *declared to be the Son of God with power, by his resurrection from the dead*; and when the Truth of this was so fully evinced by the wonderful Descent of the Holy Ghost on his Disciples, enabling them on a sudden to speak all Languages, and to do

(y) Chap. xvii. 30, &c.  
on the Gospels foregoing.

(z) See Remarks II, and III.



do so many wonderful Works in his Name, and in Confirmation of that Doctrine; this fully answered their Objections, and ought to have removed all their Prejudices; by this they might have seen, that *all power was given to him both in heaven and in earth*; that a greater than *Moses* was here, and that God had made this same *Jesus both Lord and Christ*.

*Fourth Remark.* Divers of the People of the Jews had been, for many Years past, dispersed through several Countries, and called *The Dispersed among the Gentiles* (z), inasmuch that there were Jews in every Nation under Heaven (a). And Josephus says (b), *The Jews were a People dispersed over all the World*. These Dispersions were first occasioned by carrying away of the Ten Tribes into *Assyria*, whence they never returned; and after by the Captivity of the Two other Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, in *Babylon*; whence though the Generality returned under *Cyrus*, and his Successors, yet divers settled there; for, many Ages after, the Posterity of the Jews remained in *Assyria*, *Parthia*, *Babylon*, &c. (c) A great Colony of them were by *Alexander* planted in his new City, that he built in *Egypt* (d), (and which he named *Alexandria*) as we have seen before. After *Alexander's* Death, *Ptolemy*, surnamed *Soter*, having surprized *Jerusalem* on a Sabbath-Day, settled another great Colony of the

L 4

Jews

(z) *John* vii. 35. (a) *Acts* ii. 5, 10.

(b) *It is chiefly all Countries then in Subjection to the Romans, κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν ὀικουμένην, de Bello, l. 7. c. 21.*

(c) *Inasmuch that Josephus mentions the Jews of his Time, On the other Side of Euphrates, and in Adiabene (which is in Assyria). Preface to the Wars, and near the End of Agrippa's Speech, Wars, Book ii. Ch. 16.*

(d) *Idem, Wars, Book ii. Chap. 21.*

*Jews* in *Egypt* (e), particularly in *Alexandria*; where, in confidence of their Fidelity to him, he allowed them great Privileges, which, together with the Convenience of a fruitful Country, allured vast Numbers of them to fix in *Egypt*. Farther, the *Jews* had been dispersed in *Syria*, the *Lesser Asia*, *Greece*, *Italy*, and elsewhere; for *Jews*, as well as *Profelytes*, are said to come from the several Countries mentioned (f). Many of the latter Dispersions might be occasioned, partly through Business; and also by the Tyrannies of *Antiochus*, before mentioned; and after by *Pompey*, and the *Roman Soldiers*.

Now, where the *Jews* settled in great Towns, they were allowed to have their *Synagogues*, or Places for their publick Worship (g). So that the Apostles, and first Preachers of the Gospel (especially *St. Paul*) finding some *Jews*, more or less, in most Cities or Countries whither they went, they betook themselves to the *Jews* in the first Place, and afterwards to the *Gentiles* (b); and thus may the Question be answered, which perhaps some raise in reading the New Testament, how the *Jews* are so often mentioned out of their own Country.

*Fifth Remark.* The Providence of God is to be observed at this Time, in disposing the Affairs of the World so, as that the Gospel might be the easier propagated; and that in two Respects, First, By the above-mentioned Dispersions of the *Jews* among the *Gentiles*, several of the *Gentiles* became  
Prose-

(e) *Idem* *Antiq.* Book xii. Chap. 1.

(f) *Acts* ii. 9, 10. see also *Pet.* i. 1. *Acts* xi. 19.

(g) *Acts* ix. 2. xiii. 14. and xviii. 24, 26.

(b) See *Acts* xiii. 46. and xviii. 5, 6.

*Profelytes* (i), of which some entirely embraced the *Jewish* Religion, and others were also admitted to the Worship of the true God (k), and so by frequenting their Synagogues, where the Old Testament was wont to be read and interpreted, they were by degrees acquainted with the Holy Scriptures, and the Types and Prophecies concerning Christ the Messiah: Herein they were all much assisted by the Translation of the Old Testament, from the *Hebrew* into *Greek*, called the *Septuagint*, spoken of before. For the *Greek* Language, in general, and this Translation, was much used (l) at this Time by the dispersed *Jews* and *Profelytes*; because, after the Enlargement of the *Macedonian* or *Grecian* Empire, the *Greek* Language became familiar to the *Jews* and neighbouring Countries: Hence the New Testament was wrote in *Greek*, and a great many Expressions therein are taken from the aforesaid Translation of the *Septuagint*, which was so much in use.

In the *second Place*, The Gospel was more easily propagated, because very many Countries were at this Time united under one Government, that of the *Romans*; so that there was an Universal Peace, which opened a Way for the Apostles, and first Preachers of Christianity, with the greater Ease and Security, to plant the Gospel in the several Parts of the World.

*Sixth Remark.* The Persecutions, which the Church of Christ underwent, were occasioned chiefly

(i) See Remark III. on the Gospels, Num. iv. concerning *Profelytes*.

(k) *Acts* ii. 10. and xiii. 43.

(l) Grot. in *Matth.* xxvii. 37. Lightfoot's *Harmony*, sub An. 62. p. 142.



chiefly by the unbelieving *Jews*: Their Enmity arose in part, from the Prejudice they had conceived against Christ Himself, in respect to the Meanness of his outward Appearance, his exposing their Hypocrisies, and wrong Notions (*i*); and partly out of a mistaken Zeal for the Law of *Moses*, which had been established by God with such Signs from Heaven, and which they presumed was to remain unalterable (*k*); and lastly, through Envy to the *Gentiles*, that they should be taken into Covenant with God, as well as themselves (*l*). On these Accounts principally, the *Jews* were not satisfied with having procured the Death of Christ, but continued their Hatred of, and violent Opposition to the Doctrine of Christianity, and the Professors of it, especially the *Jews* (their own Countrymen) who were Believers; whom they persecuted both in *Judea*, and in other Countries, through the Assistance or Connivance of the *Roman Power* (*m*).

The *Jews* pretended that the Christians were *Movers of Sedition* (*n*), and had treasonable Designs against the Empire, in making Christ a King; and so did *contrary to the Decrees of Cæsar*, saying, *that there is another King, one Jesus* (*o*); because they owned him for the Messiah, and called him *Lord*, and hoped for a Kingdom in Heaven (*p*)  
(the

(*i*) For which see *Remarks II, III. on the Gospels.*

(*k*) For which see what hath been said on the *Pentateuch*, concerning the Ceremonial Law.

(*l*) Of which at large in the following History of the *Acts*, concerning the Conversion of the *Gentiles*.

(*m*) See *Acts* xiv. 2, 19. xvii. 5, 7, 13. xviii. 12. and xx. 19. compare *Rom.* xv. 31. and *1 Theff.* ii. 14, 15.

(*n*) *Acts* xxiv. 5.

(*o*) In the same manner the Christians were accused about a hundred Years afterwards. *Just. Martyr. Apol.* i. §. 11. Edit. Grabe.

(*p*) *Acts* xvii. 7.

(the same they had suggested before against Christ himself) (*q*). Nay, so far did the Malice of the Unbelieving *Jews* proceed, as that, having first ordered that Jesus Christ, and those who believed in him, should be solemnly pronounced accursed in their Synagogues (*r*), they sent from *Jerusalem*, into all other Countries, certain chosen Persons on purpose to spread false and scandalous Reports concerning the Religion of the Christians, representing them as guilty of Atheism, and all manner of Impiety, to make them odious to all Mankind (*s*).

Here, by the way, we may take notice, that the *Jews* expressed the like Hatred against the *Christians*, and oppressed them in the following Centuries. The *Christians* at *Smyrna*, in their Epistle concerning the Martyrdom of *Polycarp* (*t*), speaking of the Multitudes getting Faggots to burn him, they add, *The Jews especially, according to their Custom, with all readiness assisting them in it.* In *Justin Martyr's* Time, about the Year 140, their Custom was not only, as hath been said, solemnly to curse the *Christians* in their Synagogues, but to persecute them more than any other ever attempted to do (*u*): Nay, even in the Reign of *Constantine*, the first Christian Emperor, they were wont, not only by all means to afflict, but even stone those of their own People, who were converted to Christianity; insomuch, that the Emperor was obliged to make the most severe Laws to prevent

(*q*) *Luke* xxiii. 2.

(*r*) *Idem* Dialog. cum Tryphone. Edit. Jebb p. 50, & 385.  
(And in this accusing of Christ and Christians they continue in their Passover Feasts. Buxtorf. Synag. c. 18. prope dimidium)

(*s*) *Iust Mart.* *ibid.* p. 52, and 317, and Note *ibid.*

(*t*) *Num.* xiii.

(*u*) *Ibid.* p. 52.

prevent it, and to threaten them with being burnt to Death if they persisted (x); and in the fourth Century, they were the chief Authors of a most violent Persecution of the *Christians* in *Persia*, under *Sapores* King thereof; which extended to the Martyrdom of the Christian Bishops and Priests, and the demolishing of the Churches. This Persecution they procured, by falsely suggesting to the *Persian* King (who it seems was at Variance with the *Roman* Emperor) that *Simeon*, the Christian Bishop in *Persia*, held a treasonable Correspondence with the Emperor, and betrayed the *Persian* Counsels to him (y); and some Time after this, under pretence of a Christian Church being on fire in the Night, they surprized and murdered a great Number of *Christians* in *Alexandria* (z).

Lastly, *St. Jerome*, about the same Time, informs us, that the *Jews* were wont three Times a Day, in all their Synagogues, to curse the very Name of *Christians*, under the Title of *Nazarenes* (a). And this Usage of their cursing *Christians* continues (b).

Having made this short Digression (which may somewhat illustrate the Opposition which the *Jews* made against Christianity at the first) we may observe farther, that, besides the spiteful Suggestions and Malice of the *Jews*, there were other Reasons for the Oppositions made against the Christian Religion, and the Professors and Preachers of it, by the *Roman* Powers, and other *Gentiles*.

1st, These

(x) *Codex de Judæis apud Centuriatores, Centuria iv. p. 850. E.*

(y) *Sozom. Hist. l. 2. c. 8.*

(z) *Socrates Hist. l. 7. c. 13.*

(a) *Hieronym. in Isa. v. 8.*

(b) So they abuse to that Purpose *Psal. lxxix. 25. and lxxix. 6, and Lam. iii. 66. Buxtorf. ibid.*



1<sup>st</sup>, These considered their own Religion as the Religion of their Ancestors, and of their Country; which their Forefathers had a long time professed and practised: And so, instead of enquiring into the excellent Design of Christianity, and the Miracles wrought in Confirmation of it, they conceived no small Prejudice against it, as a new and strange Doctrine, preferring *one Jesus*, who was crucified, to all their Gods; and against the Publishers of it, as Men who *turned the world upside down*. Hence the Christian Religion, at its first Appearance, was *every where spoken against* by the *Gentiles*, and accused of Atheism and (*d*) Impiety, as tending to undermine the very Being and Worship of their Gods, and to bring their Temples and Sacrifices into Contempt; which had been, for so many Ages throughout the World, so much revered and esteemed (*e*). Again; besides the general Prejudice the Heathens conceived against the Christian Religion, as undermining their own; the *Roman* Governors were excited against it, from their Jealousy of all Innovations in Religion, as tending to Faction, and *moving of Sedition* (*f*). Now, these Prejudices of the Heathen were manifestly unreasonable: For, the Christian Religion is the oldest Religion in the World, which teaches the Worship of the One True God, which the ancient Patriarchs and first Planters of the World professed; and is much superior in Age to what the most ancient *Gentiles* could pretend to. And the Preachers of this Religion were so far from setting up *Atheism*, and Contempt of Religion (as they were accused to do, because they preached against

(*d*) Cave's Primitive Christianity, Part I. Chap. 1.

(*e*) *Acts* xvii. 6. and xix. 26, 27, 28, 35.

(*f*) *Acts* xvii. 6. and xxiv. 5.

against the many Idols and false Gods) that on the contrary, they pressed the Worship of the True God, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, and pronounced the best Rewards for so doing; and also enjoined the most peaceable Subjection to *Government*. And yet, on this mistaken Notion of the Atheism of Christians, they were frequently accused by the Heathens, as being the Occasion of all the publick Calamities that beset the World; as Earthquakes, Famine, Pestilence, &c. The People judging, that the Gods took Vengeance on the Empire, for that Neglect of the ancient Pagan Worship, which was caused by the Doctrines of the Gospel, where-ever they took Place. This occasioned divers excellent Apologies of the most learned among the Christians, in the Second and Third Centuries (g).

2dly, The Doctrine of the *Resurrection*, as well as of *Christ crucified*, was a great Stumbling-block to many of the *Gentiles* (h). Then certain *Philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him*: And some said, *What will this babbler say? Other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange Gods; because he preached to them Jesus and the Resurrection*. Upon which St. Paul sets before them the True God, the Maker and Preserver of the World; *in whom we live, and move, and have our being* (i). And farther adds, that it ought not to have seemed so strange to them, that he preached *Jesus the Saviour, and also the Judge of all Men; seeing God hath given assurance thereof, in that he hath raised him from the dead* (k). And consequently,

(g) As of Tertullian, Cyprian, Arnobius, &c. See Cave, *ibid.* Chap. 3.

(h) *Acts* xvii. 18, 32. (i) *Ver.* 24, 28. (k) *Ver.* 31.

quently, that by Him he both can, and will raise others also; especially, since he *bath given such power unto men*, to work so great Miracles in Confirmation of this Doctrine: And why should it be thought so difficult, for the All-seeing and All-powerful God, to gather together and make up the Body, out of the same remaining Materials, however scattered, altered or dispersed (for nothing can be annihilated, or utterly destroyed, but by the same Power that created it) as well as at the first, to form it out of the confused Mixture in the Dust of the Earth?

3dly, The Preachers of Christianity taught Men to crucify *the lusts of the flesh*, and to abandon their Impieties: And no wonder, that the vicious Heathens (who were *given up to uncleanness* (k)), should endeavour to drive such a Religion out of the World, which would oblige them to renounce their Darling Vices. Once more: The Dangers and Losses, with other Tribulations foretold by the Preachers of this Doctrine (such as (l) *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution*) increased the Gentiles Aversion to it.

The first Emperor who raised a general Persecution against the Christians, was (m) *Nero*, a Prince of the most brutish Manners; who being either offended with the Narrowness of the Streets of the City of *Rome*, or, ambitious of being the Author of more stately Buildings, caused it to be burnt, about Thirty Years after Christ's Death, and then laid it on the Christians; who, though innocent, were yet most barbarously persecuted; many being cloathed in the Skins of wild Beasts,  
and

(k) *Rom* ii. 24.

(l) *2 Tim.* iii. 12.

(m) *Tacitus*, *An.* l. 15. c. 44. *Euseb.* *Hist.* l. 2. c. 25.



and as such, torn in pieces by Dogs ; other crucified, and burnt alive ; and that in a sportful manner, to give Light in the Night-time (*n*), instead of Torches. Under this Persecution, St. *Peter* was crucified, and St. *Paul* beheaded (*o*).

*Seventh Remark.* In the History of the first publishing of the Gospel, there is mention made of *Prophets* (*p*). Such were *Judas* and *Silas* (*q*), and such a one, probably, was *Ananias*, who baptized St. *Paul* (*r*). These Prophets seem to be also such, who are called (*s*) *spiritual*, where the Terms are both joined together ; *If any man think himself to be a Prophet, or spiritual.* These were ordained for the present Occasion, immediately by God Himself, they being inspired in an extraordinary Manner, with the spiritual Gifts, not only of foretelling Things to come, but (which in the New Testament, is the proper Notion of *Prophecy*) of being (*t*) *Interpreters* ; for the interpreting the Types and Prophecies in the Old Testament that relate to Christ (as *Aaron* is said to be a *Prophet*,  
or

(*n*) Sulpitius, sub An. 68.

(*o*) Idem ib.d.

(*p*) Dodwell de Jure, c. 3. Hammond in Luke i. 11. and in 1 Cor. xii. As also Acts xi. 27. and xiii. 1.

(*q*) Acts xv. 32.

(*r*) Acts ix.

(*s*) Πνευματικοί. Gal. vi. 1. and 1 Cor. xiv. 37.

(*t*) Bishop Stillingfleet's Sermons, Vol. II. in Matt. vii. 15, 16. p. 68. Who quotes St. Chrysostom in 1 Cor. Hom. 36, that προφήτης is the same with ἑρμηνευτής ; and also other Greek Authors, as Themistocles, Orat. 1. calls an Interpreter of Aristotle, προφήτη Ἀριστοτέλης ; he also observes, that the Reason why the Name of Prophecy came to be restrained to the Prediction of Things to come, was, because future Events lying most out of the Reach of Mens Knowledge, the foretelling of those was looked upon as the greatest Evidence of Divine Inspiration.

or Interpreter to *Moses* (t), thereby to assist the Apostles in making Converts to Christianity, and to confirm the Disciples in the Faith; and, for the present, to perform the Duties of publick Ministry in the Church, to *speake unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort*, as St. Paul explains the Action of him that *prophesieth* (u), whereby the present Government of the Church was a Sort of *Theocracy*, or under the immediate Direction of the Divine Spirit; but, as the Numbers of Christians increased, the Apostles, inspired by the same Spirit, ordained *Elders*, or Bishops and Presbyters, in the Cities where they had preached the Gospel (x). Those extraordinary Prophets or Teachers aforementioned (who were as so many secondary Apostles) were most necessary and useful, in the Beginning of Christianity, before the Settlement of particular Churches, and the Government thereof, by their proper Elders and Pastors; and this was after the Example of the ancient Church of the *Jews*; in which the *ordinary* Ministerial Offices, both of Sacrificing and Instructing, were proper to the Tribe of *Levi*, and the Priestly Family; the *priest's* lips were to *keep knowledge*, and the People were to *seek the law at his mouth* (y). But the Prophets had an *extraordinary* Power (of whatever Tribe they were) of Sacrificing and Instructing: Thus *Samuel* offered a Burnt-Offering (z). And the Business of the latter Prophets, as well as of the former, was to warn and teach the People. So that this Method was most suitable to the great Design of converting the *Jews*, when the Gospel was at first published, that

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M

Christ

(t) *Exod.* vii. 1. (u) 1 *Cor.* xiv. 3.

(x) As *Acts* xiv. 21, 23. (y) *Malach.* ii. 7.

(z) 1 *Sam.* vii. Also *Elijah*, 1 *Kings* xviii.

Christ should give *some apostles, and some prophets and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ* (a).

(a) *Eph. iv. 11, 12.*

## C H A P. IX.

### *Contents of the ACTS of the Apostles.*

**H**AVING made these necessary Remarks, we may now return to the History contained in the *Acts* of the Apostles.

In the Beginning whereof we read the particular Circumstances of our Lord's Ascension into Heaven; after which the Apostles and others (in all *about an hundred and twenty*) assembled together, and celebrated the publick Worship of God, and chose *Matthias* to be one of the Number of the Twelve, in the room of the Traitor *Judas*; which they did by Prayer and Lots, since the Holy Ghost was not as yet given in an extraordinary Manner to direct them: And by this Means (forasmuch as when *the lot is cast into the lap, the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord* (a), the Person chosen into the Apostleship did not want the Characteristick of an Apostle, being chosen by the Interposition and Designation of Christ himself, to whom they prayed for that Purpose (b).

The Death of *Judas* (c), is thus expressed, that *falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out*: In *Matt. xxvii. 5.* it is, *He departed, and went and hanged himself*; that  
is

(a) *Prov. xvi. 33.*      (b) *Chap. 1.*      (c) *Ver. 18.*



is, He hanged himself, and (probably by the Devil's Procurement, who had possessed him) fell headlong from the Place where he hung, and thereby burst asunder ; his unparalleled Sin having met with a suitable unheard-of Punishment.

Among those who were assembled together after our Lord's Ascension, we find (d), *Mary the Mother of Jesus* ; which is the last Time that she is mentioned in the holy Scriptures. What became of her afterwards is not revealed to us ; most likely, she continued with St. *John* to her Death, unto whom Christ on the Cross had committed the Care of her (e). *Behold thy Mother* ; that is, take Care of her, as if she were such. As for her *Assumption* into Heaven (which the Church of *Rome* commemorates by a solemn Festival-Day on the 15th of *August*) Antiquity, as well as the Scripture, is silent ; the Tracts concerning it are known to be forged in After-Ages (f). The first Account out of any good Author is, that of *Eusebius*, and he only says, *some have wrote that it was revealed to them* (g). After him *Epiphanius*, who flourished about the Year 368, thus expresses himself concerning it ; *I define nothing, nor say that she remained immortal, and neither do I affirm that she died* (h). So that it is plain, he knew nothing that could be depended on concerning her Assumption. Lastly, *Baronius* himself is so tender as to say ; *The Church of God is more inclined to believe, that she is now, together with her Body, in Heaven* (i).

M 2

We

(d) *Ver.* 14. (e) *John* xix. 27.

(f) *Spanhemius* *Introduct.* ad *Historiam* N. T. Canon I.

(g) In *Chronico*.

(h) *Hæres.* 78. *Antidicomarianitæ*, Num. xi.

(i) *Martyrolog.* *Roman.* *August.* 15.

We are next informed in the *Acts* (*k*), that Christ, who had promised the Holy Spirit, performed that Promise on the tenth Day after his Ascension ; it being the Day of *Pentecost* (a Feast of the *Jews*, fifty Days after the *Passover*) celebrated in Memory of the Law delivered on Mount *Sinai* ; on the same Day, the Apostles were enabled to finish the new Law or Gospel, by fulfilling of the Old ; for when *they were all with one accord in one place*, the Holy Ghost descended in the Likeness of cloven fiery Tongues upon the Apostles and others, that were to be the first Publishers of the Gospel. Whereby a Company of illiterate Persons were on a sudden enabled to speak unknown Languages, and to interpret the Tongues of others, among a great Multitude of Persons of different Countries and Languages ; who being, some of them *Israelites* or *Jews* of the Dispersion, and others *Profelytes* (*l*), were then at *Jerusalem* to celebrate the Feast of *Pentecost* : Every one of which heard them speak in their own Tongues (whether *Hebrew*, *Chaldee*, *Persian*, *Arabick*, *Greek*, *Latin*, and all the strange and different Dialects whatsoever) which they themselves used *in their own Tongues wherein they were born* ; and all this in the Name of Christ, and in Confirmation of their Testimony concerning His *Resurrection*, and His being *advanced at the right hand of the Father* (*m*). This was an amazing Conviction, and gave a most uncontrollable Evidence of a Supernatural and Divine Assistance : This was a full Proof that Christ had *all power in heaven and in earth* given unto him ; and hereby, the Apostles and the first Preachers of the Gospel were fitly qualified

(*k*) Chap. ii. 1, &c. (*l*) Ver. 10. (*m*) Ver. 22, &c.

fied to declare to all that lived in different Parts of the World, what Christ had done, and to convert Mankind to the Christian Faith (*n*).

The particular *Effects* of this Holy Spirit were in the first place, an Ability of understanding and speaking divers *Languages*, as well to give Evidence to a Supernatural and Divine Assistance (as hath been said) as to qualify them for Preaching to all Nations; and also a Power of working *Miracles*, by Casting out Devils, Healing Diseases, and Raising the Dead, for the convincing both of *Jews* and *Heathens*; that Power being a clear Evidence that God was with them, and gave Testimony to what they preached and wrote, in pursuance of their Commission (*o*). Another Gift of the Spirit was, what St. *Paul* styles the Gift of *Faith* (*p*), or the Faith of Miracles; which consisted in a Supernatural Confidence or Assurance, wrought by the Spirit in the Soul of Man, by which he was sure he could do such or such Miracles, before he attempted to do them: Thus (*q*), *Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains*, and (*r*) *Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles*; and this Gift was necessary, lest they should attempt to do Miracles when they could not, and so discredit their own Doctrine and Authority.

They had also, by this Holy Spirit, their *Minds enlightened*, clearly to understand Divine Truth; and the Gift of *Prophecy*, or of understanding and teaching the hidden Sense and Mysteries of the Old Testament relating to Christ, and the State of the Gospel (*s*). Also the Gift of *Discerning of Spi-*

M 3

rits,

(*n*) Compare Chap. iv. 31. viii. 17. x. 44, 45, 46.  
and xi. 15. (*o*) Heb. ii. 3, 4. (*p*) 1 Cor. xii. 9.  
(*q*) 1 Cor. xiii. 2. (*r*) Acts vi. 1. (*s*) Chap. xix. 6.



*rits* (t). Whereby they could discover the Truth or Fallhood of Mens Pretensions (u). And, since there were *Lying Wonders*, they could discern by what Spirit, whether good or evil, any extraordinary Operation was performed, to distinguish the Works of the Devil from those of the Spirit of God. They had also the Gift of *Boldness and Courage* in their own Hearts (x), and the *Power of Speaking*, so as that their Words might sink into the Hearts of their Hearers (y). They had moreover, by the same Spirit, a Power of *Infllicting bodily Punishment* upon great and notorious Sinners (z). Lastly, the Apostles had a Power to *confer those gifts* of the Holy Ghost on others, by laying Hands on them (a).

These were the extraordinary Divine Assistances, which encouraged the Apostles to undertake, and enabled them to go through with so difficult and hazardous an Employment.

Note here, That the Power by which these Miracles were wrought, and which were afterwards communicated to many of the new Converts to the Faith, is frequently in this Book called, *the Holy Ghost*: By which is often meant, not the Third Person in the Trinity, but the wonderful Effusion of those Gifts, the Dispensation of which is derived from the Holy Spirit (the Effects and Operations of the Spirit having often the Name of the Spirit, who is the Cause of those Operations. Thus, (b) the Converts at *Samaria* received *the Holy Ghost*; that is, the Gift of Tongues, and other miraculous Powers of the Divine Spirit.

But

(t) 1 Cor. xii. 10.

(u) As *Acts* viii. 21.

(x) *Chap.* iv. 13.

(y) *Chap.* ii. 37.

(z) As *Acts* xiii. 11. 1 Cor. v. 5. 2 Cor. xiii. 2.

(a) *Acts* viii. 17.

(b) *Chap.* viii. 15, 16, 17.

But if the Holy Ghost was now conferred on the Apostles, why doth St. *John* inform us, that Christ, before his Ascension, breathed on them, and said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost* (c)? This Symbol or Ceremony of Breathing on them in St. *John*, hath been thought to mean a *confirming them in their Dependance* on Christ's sending to them the Holy Ghost, and in some Degree a conferring the same upon them, which we read, in the *Acts*, to be after Christ's Ascension more plentifully sent down. But if we consider the whole Passage (d), *As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you; and when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* It seems that St. *John* gives an Account of Christ's *conferring*, or more fully establishing, the Apostolical and Ministerial *Authority* and *Commission*, of publishing the Gospel of Salvation, reconciling Sinners to God, and of governing and instructing the Church (e); sending them, as his Father had sent him, (by *anointing* or consecrating him *with the Holy Ghost* (f)). But in the *Acts* we have an Account of the bestowing on

M 4

them

(c) *John* xx. 22.

(d) *John* xx. 21, 22, 23.

(e) This was St. Cyprian's Construction (Epist. 69. Edit. Oxon.) Quo in loco ostendit, eum solum posse baptizare, & remissionem peccatorum dare, qui habeat Spiritum Sanctum. And St. Austin applies it in the same Manner, contra Parmenianum, l. 2. c. 11. So also St. Chrysost. in *John* xx. 21, &c. In this he is followed by Bishop Taylor, in his Life of Christ, Part 3. §. 16. It is true, indeed, before this Time we find that Christ had ordained his Apostles to preach the Gospel, and had given them Power to work Miracles in Confirmation of it, Mark iii. 13, 14. Matt. x. 1. But by this last and more solemn Ordination, they were fully established in their Office.

(f) *Luke* iii. 22. *Acts* x. 38.

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them the *Means to enable them* for the Performance and Executing of that Commission : So that (g) Christ gave to the Apostles the *Commission*, although they could not fully *execute* the same, till he should *send the Promise of the Father upon them*, and they were *endued with Power from on high* (h). To the same Purpose St. *John* says, *The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not then glorified* (i). Of the conferring of which enabling Power, in an open, visible Manner, we have here the History in the *Acts*.

If we consider the Suffering which the Apostles underwent, being subject to Hunger and Cold, Want and Necessity, Stripes and Imprisonments, we may conclude that they could not exercise this Power of doing Miracles at all Times, or at their own Pleasure ; for if they could, most likely they would have cleared the Way for their great Work of publishing the Gospel, by putting off those Sufferings ; nor would St. *Paul* have left *Trophimus* at *Miletum* sick (k), or have suffered that Infirmary, whatever it was, *the thorn in the flesh* (l), to have continued on himself. But they could, and did work Miracles, when God saw it necessary to evidence their Commission from him, and to manifest the Truth of their Doctrine.

The Holy Apostles thus qualified, set about their great Work of publishing the Gospel of Salvation, and planting the Church.

And first, they preached Christ to the *Jews* at *Jerusalem*, of whom above *three thousand* were converted (m). Therefore the Church of *Jerusalem* is the *Mother Church* ; the Members whereof  
main-

(g) In *John* xx.

(i) *John* vii. 29.

(l) 2 *Cor.* xii. 7.

(h) *Luke* xxiv. 49.

(k) 2 *Tim.* iv. 20.

(m) *Chap.* ii. 14, &c.



maintained their Christian Society by their Unanimity, in adhering stedfastly to the Apostles and their Doctrine, and by their joint Devotion, and mutual Love and Charity.

The great Doctrine which the Apostles especially pressed, was, That *Jesus*, whom their Rulers had crucified and slain as a Malefactor (*n*), was yet alive, being *risen from the dead*, and ascended into Heaven; of which that Effusion of the Holy Ghost, which Jesus had promised before his Death, and the miraculous Works wrought by them in his Name, or by virtue of his Power, in Testimony of that Doctrine, was the most uncontrollable and convincing Proof; and consequently that the same Jesus was *the Christ*, or true Messiah (*o*.)

Soon after, the Apostles came to be the more taken notice of, by healing a poor Cripple above forty Years old, who had been lame from his Birth, and was wont to be laid at the Entrance into the Temple-Court, and so was known to many for some Years. The restoring to him the present Use of his Feet was much taken notice of, and brought together many People: *Peter* improved this Opportunity, assuring them, that the Miracle was effected by the Power of, and Faith in the same Jesus, whom their Rulers had crucified, and who was risen again from the Dead, and glorified in Heaven; and that he was the *Prophet*, whom *Moses* had foretold God would *raise up* unto them (*p*), and whom all the Prophets had spoken of, being *that Seed of Abraham*, in whom all Nations were to be blessed; that is, the Messiah and Saviour; concluding, that they were the Persons

(*n*) *Ver.* 23.      (*o*) *Ver.* 32, 33, 36. and *Chap.* v. 30, 31, 32.      (*p*) *Deut.* xviii. 15.

sons to whom in the *first* Place he was sent. This prevailed on many ; infomuch that the Believers were in Number *about five thousand* (q). But the Devil seeing his Kingdom decaying, stirred up the Rulers to imprison the Apostles and first Christians ; but God delivered them, and they went on in publishing Christ to be the Messiah and Saviour, in working Miracles, and converting many (r).

And whereas some of the Believers were poor, divers of the richer Sort sold their Possessions, and brought the Money to the Apostles to be distributed in common, as Occasion required. Among the rest, one *Ananias*, and *Saphira* his Wife, pretended to do so too ; but privately kept back a Part of the Price, and thereby attempted to deceive the Apostles, though immediately guided by the Holy Ghost ; as if the Divine Spirit could not discern Things secret : Upon which they were made a severe Example of, being stricken dead, for a Terror to all others in that Infant State of the Church, and to establish the Authority of the Apostles, and the Church's Discipline : And the Effect was accordingly, for *great fear came upon all the Church, and upon as many as heard these things* (s).

And because, on the farther Increase of the Christians, there was still a great Number of Widows and other Poor, to be daily relieved out of the charitable Contributions of the richer Sort, and the common Stock of the Church (The *Jewish* Synagogues, to which they belonged, taking no farther Care of them, who forsook the *Jewish* Religion, and became Christians) it so happened, that

(q) Chap. iii. 1, &c. and Chap. iv. 4, 22.

(r) Chap. iv. 5. (s) Chap. v.

that there arose a murmuring of the Grecians, or Hellenists (that is, as some interpret (t), Jews of the Dispersion; who living among the Greeks, spake the Greek Language) against the Hebrews, who used the Hebrew or Syriac Tongue: Or rather, as others (u), these Grecians or Hellenists were Greeks or Gentiles by Descent, but Profelytes to the Jewish Religion, and afterwards Christian Converts, from whom the Jews, who were so by Descent from Abraham, are here distinguished by the Name of Hebrews. The Objection (x), that the Word was preached to the Jews only; and yet, (y) some are said to speak unto the Grecians, who therefore were Jews; is solved, by observing, that in the Original, after the most ancient Copies, it is not Grecians, but Gentiles; and, or, but some of them spake unto the Gentiles (z), or Gentile Converts at Antioch, who are here taken Notice of. And this Murmuring was, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration of Provisions; possibly because the Jewish Christians were kinder to those of their own Nation than to the Hellenists, or Profelytes, who embraced Christianity. Now that the Apostles might not be hindered by looking after those poor Christians, they chose seven Deacons for that Purpose; of whom St. Stephen was one, who being accused for affirming Jesus to be the Messiah, and the Abolishment

(t) Grotius and Hammond in Acts vi. 1. Mede, Book I. Disc. 20.

(u) Dr. Wells's second Discourse before the Gospels, and Dr. Cave of St. Stephen, Num. iv.

(x) From Chap. xi. 19. (y) Ver. 20.

(z) Not ἑλληνιστῶς but Ἴλληνοι. So the Alexandrian, and accordingly the Vul. Syr. Arab. Ethiop. Dr. Mill. in loc.



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lishment of the Law of *Moses*, was stoned to Death (a).

This *Stephen* was the first Martyr in the Christian Church. But the Malice and Rage of the Rulers did not end so: The other Christians at *Jerusalem* were sought after, prosecuted, and imprisoned, especially by *Saul*; who being zealous, *breathed out Threatnings and Slaughters* against the Christians: But God turned this to good; for many being scattered up and down the Country of *Judea* and *Samaria*, the Christian Faith was the more propagated, and many Miracles were wrought to confirm it (b).

At this Time there was in *Samaria* a crafty and ambitious Person, named *Simon*, who by Sorcery and Magick Arts had deluded many into the Belief that he was *the great Power of God*: Upon the Preaching and Miracles of *Philip the Deacon*, he became a Convert to the Faith: But seeing the Apostles, *Peter* and *John* (who came to confirm the Church of *Samaria*) to confer the Power of Miracles, and other Gifts of the Holy Ghost, by laying on their Hands; his Ambition and Covetousness prompted him to offer them Money, for the Power of doing as they did: Being rebuked, he pretended Repentance (c), possibly fearing to be made an Example of Dissimulation, as *Ananias* was [But he afterwards proceeded in his Magick Arts, and became the Author (d) of the first and grossest Heresies in the Church: At length, pretending to fly into Heaven, on the Prayer

(a) Chap. vi. vii.

(b) Chap. viii.

(c) Chap. viii. 9, &c.

(d) Iren. l. i. c. 20. Tertul. de Præscript. Hæretic. §. 46. Dr. Cave, of St. Peter, §. 9.



Prayer of St. Peter, it is said, he fell down and died.]

Philip having left *Samaria*, was directed by an Angel to an *Eunuch*, who was chief Treasurer to the Queen of *Æthiopia* (as it was anciently a Custom) which still continues in the *Eastern Parts*, to employ Eunuchs in Offices of chief Trust and Command, especially by Empresses or Queens, to avoid Suspicion (e). This Eunuch, being a Profelyte to the *Jewish* Religion, had come to *Jerusalem* to perform his Worship at the Temple ; and being on his Return, was converted and baptized by Philip (f). Some of the Christians were driven as far as *Damascus*, a City in *Syria*, one hundred and forty Miles from *Jerusalem* (g).

Saul had received Warrants from the High Priest and the Council, to secure all he could find there :

(e) Grot. in Acts viii. 27. So 2 Kings viii. 6. *The King appointed an Officer, Hebr. an Eunuch, to restore all that was hers. And Esth. iv. 4. Her Chamberlains, Hebr. Eunuchs. Therefore the Chaldee reads, in Gen. xxxvii. 36. for an Eunuch, Rabba, a Prince or Officer. Upon which Bishop Patrick observes, that the Hebrew Word Saris, oftentimes, not only signifies an Eunuch, by whom the Eastern Queens were attended ; but it likewise signifies all the great Courtiers, as the Chaldee here translates it : And that this was the prime Signification of the Word, till in After-times, the Depravation of Manners, and the Jealousy of the Eastern Kings, made them set none but Slaves, who were castrated, to attend their Queens ; by whom they were preferred to great Offices, and so came to enjoy this Name. But besides the Jealousy of Princes, another Reason may be given for Eunuchs being preferred to Offices of State ; viz. as having no Obligation of Wives and Children, they may be supposed to be more trusty, and to study more the Service of their Prince, than their own private Advantage, or setting up a Family for themselves. See for the modern Custom of employing Eunuchs. Thevenot's Trav. Part I. B. I. Ch. 18. Ray's Collect. of Trav. Part III. Chap. 2. p. 269.*

(f) Chap. viii. 26. (g) As Baudrand, Ranwolf says, *fix Days Journey (at three Miles to an Hour's travelling, and six Hours to a Day)* Ray's Collect. of Trav. Part III. Chap. 1. p. 280.

there : For it seems the *Romans* permitted (*b*) the *Sanhedrim*, or great Council in *Jerusalem*, to exercise an Authority over their Countrymen, in Matters concerning their own Religion, not only in *Judea*, but in all other Places where there were *Jewish* Synagogues ; and even the Governor of *Damascus* (with the Connivance, no Doubt, of *Aretas* the King) assisted the *Jews* in their Persecution of the Christians (*i*).

But we have an Account, *Chap. 9.* how this *Saul*, one of the violent Persecutors of the Church, was in a wonderful Manner converted (by a Glory or dazzling Light, and a Voice from Heaven) and endued with the Holy Ghost. He was also made an *Apostle*, and miraculously instructed by the Revelation of *Jesus Christ himself* (*k*). Accordingly he begins his Epistles with *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ*. He became afterward highly instrumental in settling Christianity in very many Places of the World.

There is some Variety of expressing the History of *St. Paul's* Conversion. The Voice above-mentioned *Saul*, *Saul, why persecutest thou me ?* *St. Paul* heard, but they that were with him heard not the voice of him that spake to him (*l*). And yet it is said (*m*), that they did hear a Voice ; that is, they heard a Voice, but they did not understand it distinctly, though they might hear a confused Noise like thundering (so they in *John* (*n*), upon hearing such a kind of Voice from Heaven, said, it thundered) so that although they heard an inarticulate Sound, as in *Chap. ix.* yet they did not,  
as

(*b*) Grot. in *Acts ix. 2.*

(*i*) *2 Cor. xi. 32.*

(*k*) *Gal. i 2. 2 Cor. xii.*

(*l*) *Chap. xxii. 9.*

(*m*) *Chap. ix. 7.*

(*n*) *xii. 28, 29.*

as St. Paul, *hear the Voice of him that spake, or the distinct Words of Christ (o),*

What has been hitherto mentioned, is the Substance of what was done in the Space of about two Years after Christ's Ascension into Heaven: And now it pleased God to order it, that the Persecution ceased, and the Christians *were multiplied, walking in the fear of the Lord, and the comfort of the Holy Ghost*; the Sick were healed, and the Dead raised to Life, and great Multitudes of the *Jewish* People were converted, to whom the Gospel had been hitherto chiefly published in *Judea*, and some other Countries where the *Jews* resided (p).

Next we learn how the Gospel was preached to the *Gentiles*. To understand this, we are to consider that the *Jews* looked on themselves to be the *peculiar* People of God, as being the Posterity of *Abraham*, and that all those of other Nations and Families, who were not *Abraham's* Posterity (whom they called *Gentiles*) were (q) *Unclean* (according to the Expression (r), no better than *Dogs*, and neglected by God; who, they pretended, owned Them alone for his Children and Favourites. Hence our Lord imitated the common Phrase of the *Jews*, when at first he rejected the Petition of a Woman of *Canaan* (strictly so called) who was a *Greek*, that is, a *Gentile* of *Syrophenicia* (s). *It is not meet to take the childrens bread, and cast it to dogs (t)*. So that the *Jews* imagined the *Gentiles* had no Title to the Promises of the Messiah, and did not belong to his Church, except they

(o) As Chap. xxii. (p) Chap. ix. 13. to the End.

(q) Lightfoot Hor. in John iii. 17. and 1 Cor. vii. 14. Cave, of St. Peter, §. 8. Num 4.

(r) Isa. xxxv. 8. (s) Mark vii. 26. (t) Matt. xv. 26.



they were circumcised, and were made Profelytes to them and their Religion ; and so being admitted into their Church, became *Jews* (*u*), and were wont to interpret all the ancient Prophecies of God's accepting of the *Gentiles*, as the Members of his Church under the Messiah, only as relating to the *Profelytes* (*x*) among the *Gentiles*, who came over to their Religion : Upon which Account they were wont to upbraid the Christians, as being uncircumcised, and as such having no Right to God's Covenant (*y*). But herein they were mistaken ; for the Messiah was of old plainly promised to *all the Families of the Earth*, the *Gentile* or *Heathen* in the most general Terms, and such as are not to be restrained to the *Jews* alone, or Profelytes to them, but take in all other Nations (*z*). Accordingly, when Christ was born, as an Angel was sent to publish it to the *Jewish* Shepherds ; so the *Gentiles*, or Wise Men from the *East*, were led by a Star to Christ. Now the tenth Chapter of this Book acquaints us, how it was plainly manifested to the Apostles that Christ died for *us*, who are *Gentiles*, as well as for the *Jews*, and that we are of the Church of God, and the *Spiritual* Children (*a*) of *Abraham* ; namely, by a Sheet let down from Heaven to *Peter* in a Vision at *Joppa*, that contained all Creatures, as well those the Law called unclean, as clean. This taught him to *call no man common or unclean*, ver. 28. but that God owned the *Gentiles*, signified by the unclean Creatures, as well as the *Jews* signified by the clean ;  
as

(*u*) See 2 *Esdras* vi. 55, 56, 57.

(*x*) Just. Martyr. Trypho, p. 354, and 361. Edit. Jebb.

(*y*) Just. Martyr, *ibid.* p. 84.

(*z*) *Gen.* xii. 3. *Isa.* xlix. 6. *Hosea* ii. 23. *Amos* ix. 11, 12.

(*a*) Ἰσραηλιτικὸν, ἀληθινὸν, πνευματικὸν γένος. Just Martyr, *ibid.* p. 37.

as he did one *Cornelius*, who, though a *devout Man*, and one who acknowledged and worshipped the true God, yet being only a *Profelyte* of the Gate (*b*), not of the Covenant, and so not circumcised, was no *Jew*, but a *Roman*, and *Gentile*, and as such accounted by the *Jews*: He with his Company were baptized, God ratifying and confirming their Title to the Gospel, by sending on them Gifts of *the Holy Ghost* (*c*).

This was done at *Cæsarea*, the most frequent Residence of the *Roman* Governors of *Judea*, and therefore inhabited by *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

*Josephus* observes (*d*), that the Inhabitants were for the most part *Greeks*, i. e. *Gentiles*. This was the first evident Manifestation that the *Gentiles*, as well as the *Jews*, had a Title to Christ. O! let us praise the Name of God, who hath called us also to his Kingdom and Glory (*e*). We may here also observe, how God rewarded the Piety of *Cornelius*; who being a *devout man*, and one that feared God with all his house, who gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway, had the Honour to be made the first Fruits of the Conversion of the *Gentiles*; to whom the Powers of the Holy Ghost were vouchsafed, as well as to

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the

(*b*) See the third general Remark on the Gospels, Num. iv. That *Cornelius* was such a *Profelyte*, seems evident; because *St. Peter*, in his Discourse to him, says, that all the Prophets give witness to Christ, Chap. x. 43. which it is not probable the Apostle had done, if *Cornelius* and his Companions had not owned the Prophets, as being *Profelytes* of the Gate.

(*c*) Chap. x. 44.

(*d*) Wars, Book III. Chap. 14.

(*e*) For this we may read over the whole tenth Chapter of the Acts; and then compare with it Rom. xv. 8. to Ver. 14. and Eph. iii. 1. to 7. and what hath been said in the first Part, concerning God's Covenant with Abraham.

the *Jewish* Converts. As for the Eunuch of *Æthiopia*, who was before this converted by *Philip*, and baptized (*f*), he was most likely a Proselyte of the (*g*) Covenant, and therefore came so long a Journey to *Jerusalem*, to pay his Attendance on the Worship of God in the Temple (*h*), and so was reputed a *Jew*.

There are two Passages in the holy Gospel, which, if not rightly understood, may seem to contradict what hath been said of this Privilege of the *Gentiles*. The first (*i*), where Christ charged his Disciples, *Not to go into the way of the Gentiles, but rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. This is answered in the 9th and 16th General Remark on the Holy Gospels, to which the Reader is referred. The second Passage is (*k*), where Christ says to a *Greek*, or *Gentile* Woman (*l*), *I am not sent, but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel*. Christ was to be *in Person* among the *Jews*, to do his Miracles, and preach to them, “forasmuch as they were the Persons who believed in one God, and who had among them the Prophecies, and Accounts given many Ages before of the Coming of Christ; and therefore from their Corner of the World, he was to be published in all other Parts: He being the Sun of Righteousness risen from *Judea*, from whence he should dart his Rays into other Places and Countries (*m*)”.

But after his Resurrection, he gave Commission to his Apostles (*n*), *Go into all the world, and preach*

(*f*) Chap. viii.

(*g*) See the Third General Remark on the Gospels, Num. iv.

(*h*) Ver. 27. (i) Matt. x. 5. (k) Matt. xv. 24.

(*l*) So called, Mark vii. 28.

(*m*) Orig. contra Celsum, l. 6. fere ad finem.

(*n*) Mark xvi. 15.



*preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized (Gentile as well as Jew) shall be saved: For then Christ was no more a Messenger sent to the Jews, but a King sitting at the Right Hand of God (n).*

*Note here, That the Jews, because they were wont to be circumcised, are often called by the Name of the Circumcision, and the Gentiles by the Uncircumcision: The Gentiles are also called Greeks (o), either because the Language of the Greeks was the more general Language then in Use; or because of all the Gentile World, the Greeks were best known to the Jews, ever since the Countries near Judea (such as the Lesser Asia and Egypt) were subject to the Macedonian or Grecian Kings.*

*This Doctrine of the Gentiles Interest in the Gospel of Salvation was such, as the Apostles themselves, for about seven Years after Christ's Death, and the Brethren who were at Jerusalem, were not satisfied in; nor was it as yet revealed unto them by the Holy Ghost: For although Christ bade them teach all nations (p), and told them, that they should be Witnesses unto him unto the uttermost parts of the earth (q); yet at first, they seem to understand this, of their preaching to the Jews dispersed amongst all Nations, and through the Earth; and so they who were scattered abroad (r), (who were doubtless some of those extraordinary inspired Persons, of which an Account has been given in the Seventh General Remark aforegoing on the Acts) are said to preach the word to none but unto the Jews only; but Peter, at his Return*

N 2

to

(n) Grotius, in Matt. xv. 24.

(o) Idem in Acts xxi. 37. and Rom. i. 16.

(p) Matt. xxviii. (q) Acts i. 8. (r) Acts xi. 19.

to *Jerusalem*, relating the History of *Cornelius*, They glorified God, saying, *Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life (s).*

This was done about seven Years after Christ's Ascension into Heaven.

Next we have an Account of the Spreading of Christianity in other Parts, besides the Country of the *Jews*; for it was before observed, that the Persecution under which *Stephen* suffered was turned by God to good, it being the Occasion of dispersing the first Christians, and thereby of propagating the Faith in several Places of the Country of the *Jews*: So also some of those who were scattered up and down, went to other Parts out of *Judea*, and came at length to *Antioch*, a City of *Syria*, about two hundred and eighty Miles from *Jerusalem (t)*, and there the Gospel was planted. The City of *Antioch* was a Place remarkable for a great Number of *Jews*, who inhabited there, ever since the Persecution of *Antiochus Epiphanes*, and enjoyed great Privileges and Immunities, and the same Freedom of the City with the *Greeks (u)*, by the Favour of the succeeding Kings of *Syria*; in-somuch, that several of the *Gentiles* became Profelytes to them; which might be some Reason why those *Jews*, who were converted *Christians*, and hunted out of their own Country, resorted thither. When the Account of the Church of Christ being planted at *Antioch* was brought to the Apostles at *Jerusalem*, they sent *Barnabas* to establish and confirm them. Those who received the Faith of Christ, were before called amongst themselves the  
*Brethren,*

(s) Chap. xi. 1. to Ver. 19.

(t) Baudrand in *Damascus*, which, he says, is in the Midway between *Antioch* and *Jerusalem* 140 Miles from each.

(u) *Josephus's Wars*, Book vii. Chap. 21. Gr. c. 3.

*Brethren, Disciples, Believers, and Saints* ; but by the *Jews, the Sect of the Nazarenes* (x), and *Galileans*, from *Nazareth* in *Galilee* where Christ abode ; but now at *Antioch* they first obtained the honourable Name of *Christians*, from Christ their Master (y), which, as it should seem, was fixed upon them in an open solemn Manner, as the Word we render *called* imports in the Original (z). This was about ten Years after Christ's Ascension.

Soon after this there happened a Famine, which had been foretold by *Agabus*, a Christian Convert ; and the Brethren at *Antioch* shew the Fruit of their Christian Profession, by sending Relief to their Fellow Christians at *Jerusalem* (a).

About the same time *Herod Agrippa*, Grandson to *Herod the Great* before mentioned, having obtained of the *Romans* the Government of *Judea* and *Samaria*, as well as *Galilee*, with the Title of King, began a Persecution of the *Christians*, especially at *Jerusalem*, the better to please the *Jews* ; and also out of his own Zeal for the *Jewish* Laws and Rites, he being a most strict Observer of them (b) ; and having beheaded *James the Apostle* (called *James the Great*, whether because of his Age or Stature, or some peculiar Favour conferred on him, is uncertain) he apprehended *Peter* also ; but God delivered him, and shortly after *Herod* died miserably : So the Gospel flourished, and many were converted (c).

N 3

In

(x) *Acts* xxiv. 5. (y) *Chap.* xi. 19, &c.

(z) *Χρηματισμοι*, an Antiochian Term for a solemn Publication ; *St. Luke, the Writer of this Book, being a Native of Antioch.* *Mr. Gregory's Notes, Chap.* 36.

(a) *Chap.* xi. 27, &c.

(b) *Joseph. Antiq. Book* xix. *Chap.* 7.

(c) *Chap.* xii. 1, &c.



In the next Place, the *xiii<sup>th</sup>* and *xiv<sup>th</sup>* Chapters acquaint us, how *Barnabas* and *Paul* were chosen by the Direction of the Holy Spirit at *Antioch*, and in a solemn Manner ordained to preach the Gospel amongst the *Gentiles* in several Countries. They did betake themselves first to the *Jews*, and being rejected by them, then to the *Gentiles*; converting many by their Doctrine and Miracles; and at length return'd to *Antioch*, and gave an Account of their Ministry.

The next Thing recorded is the Dispute which happened at *Antioch*, that occasioned some Disturbance (*d*); namely, since many *Gentiles*, and particularly those of them who had been Profelytes of the Gate, were converted as well as *Jews*, whether those *Gentile* Converts were obliged to be *circumcised*, and in other Respects to *keep the Law of Moses*; which the converted *Jews* would still suppose necessary; for although they were convinced by the powerful Evidence of the Gospel, yet they still retain'd a very high Veneration for the Institution of their great Master *Moses* (*e*), and their old *Customs* in which they had been brought up; which they would impose on the *Gentile* Converts also. Upon this it was determined, that such a Course should be taken, as was, by God's Appointment, observed for avoiding Schism among the *Jews* (and they were the People who made up a great Number of those first Converts). They were in such a Case to repair to the *Sanhedrim*, or great Council, and be determined by the same (*f*). In like Manner, the Church at *Antioch* appointed *Barnabas* and *Paul* to repair to those of the Apostles and Elders, who were then  
at

(*d*) *Chap.* xv. 1, &c.

(*e*) *Acts* xxi. 20, 21.

(*f*) *Deut.* xvii. 8, to 14.

at *Jerusalem* (the only Christian *Sanhedrim*) for which also some think there was a *Revelation* by the Spirit (g). Here a Council is held, and *Paul* and *Barnabas* declare what Miracles God had wrought by them among the *Gentiles* for their Conversion; a plain Evidence, that *they* were accepted by God without Circumcision, or other *Mosaic* Rites; especially since, as *St. Peter* declared, God bestowed on them, as well as the converted *Jews*, the Gifts and Powers of the Holy Ghost. At length it was determined, that the *Gentile* Christians were not bound to the *Jewish* *Mosaic* Ordinances, as Circumcision, and the rest; only that they abstain from pollution of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood. Which Injunctions the Apostles might lay on the *Gentile* Converts, because they are agreeable to the Precepts which the *Jews* suppose given to the Sons of *Noah* (h); and this they obliged the Proselytes of the Gate to (i) submit to; which therefore, it was as necessary for them to do, now they were become Proselytes to Christianity. And besides this, by observing the Apostles Injunctions, they would forbear giving too great Offence to the *Jewish* Converts (which would have been an Hindrance to their Christian Unity) by their eating those Things which the *Jews* made Conscience to abstain from, as being expressly forbidden in their Law, however they might be esteemed indifferent in themselves; namely, *Meats* which had been offered to Idols, that they may not so much as seem to partake in

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the

(g) From *Gal.* ii. 2.

(h) See General Remark IV. on the Pentateuch.

(i) See Remark III. on the Gospels concerning Proselytes, Num. iv.

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the Idolatry (*k*); or *Blood*, which is called *the Life*, as containing the vital Spirits, whereby they were caution'd against Murder (*l*); or *things strangled*, for the avoiding of eating Blood (*m*); and also that they should abstain from *Fornication*, which the *Gentiles* allowed themselves in, before (*n*) their Conversion, and accounted as no Crime, especially whilst they accompanied only with those Women who prostituted their Bodies for Gain. This Determination *Paul* and *Barnabas* returned with, and the Disturbance ceased in the Church at *Antioch*, though the Dispute was again renewed in divers Places, and gave the Apostles much Trouble; as we shall find in the Epistles.

As to what follows in this Book, we have not the particular Account of all the Apostles Travels, and planting of Churches; but chiefly of what relates to *St. Paul*, whose Companion the Writer was. And first, we find that *Paul* and *Barnabas* agree to visit the several Churches they had before planted; but, though good Men, there happened a Contention about taking one *John* with them, which occasion'd them to part, and go several Ways: But the Providence of God is to be observed in this, the Church being more enlarged afterwards by their separate Labours (*o*).

The xvi, xvii, xviii, xix, and xx Chapters give an Account of *St. Paul's* farther preaching the Gospel in several Countries and Cities, many thousand Miles distant; travelling for that Purpose by Sea and Land, from East to West, for about seven Years, through many Difficulties and Hardships, planting the Gospel in many Parts of the

*Lesser*

(*k*) *Exod.* xxxiv. 15.

(*l*) *Lev.* xvii. 10.

(*m*) *Levit.* xvii. 13.

(*n*) Grotius in *Act.* xv. 20.

(*o*) *Chap.* xv. 36, &c.



*Lesser Asia* ; and in *Europe*, as in divers Parts of *Greece*, chiefly in the Cities of *Thessalonica* and *Corinth* ; the Holy Ghost assisting him, and confirming his Words by divers Miracles.

Nor did he only travel up and down to preach and establish the Christian Doctrine, but also wrote *Epistles* to several of the Churches which himself or others had at first planted ; whereby, though absent, he might, as Occasion was offered, admonish, comfort, instruct, or confirm them. His great Care, and compassionate Concern for the Christian Churches, may be observed by his farewell Speech when he left *Asia* (p), and in several Parts of his *Epistles*. His Zeal also to do and suffer the utmost in the Cause of Christ appears, in that it being foretold him by the Spirit, speaking by *Agabus* a Prophet, that he should be bound at *Jerusalem*, and deliver'd up to the *Gentiles* ; he was yet ready *not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus* (q).

And indeed, as he was designed for extraordinary Service to the Church, so he was encouraged in an extraordinary Manner ; for though he was not converted till after Christ's Ascension, and so had not the Happiness of conversing with our Lord Jesus on Earth, as the other Apostles ; yet in a Vision he had a Glimpse of the heavenly Joys, being *caught up to the third heaven*, where he saw and heard things unutterable (r). The Prospect of which unspeakable Glory, no Doubt, made him so earnest in his Ministry, and so to neglect the World and this Life, that he desired *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ* ; and till that blessed Time should come, he went on in his Office of publishing

(p) *Chap. xx. 17, &c.*

(r) *2 Cor. xii. 1, &c.*

(q) *Chap. xxi. 10, 10-14.*

publishing the Gospel, and, notwithstanding the Danger foretold, at length came to *Jerusalem* (s).

What became of *St. Paul* afterwards, we read (t), viz. that being come to *Jerusalem*, he was apprehended and brought before the Council, or *Sanhedrim*, and was in Danger of being murdered by the unbelieving *Jews*; but God encouraged and delivered him. Afterwards, he pleaded for himself, and accounted for his Doctrine and Life, before the Procurators or Governors, *Felix* and *Festus*, and also before King *Agrippa*: But after about two Years Imprisonment at *Cæsarea*, under the *Roman* Governors, he appealed to the Emperor, which occasioned his being sent Prisoner to *Rome*. On the Sea, he was miraculously preserved in a Shipwreck. Being at length arrived at *Rome*, he was suffered to dwell in a private House. First, He betook himself (as heretofore in other Places) to the *Jews* which were then at *Rome*, endeavouring to convince them that *Jesus* was the Messiah and Saviour: Some he gained; others rejected his Doctrine: Then he turned to the *Gentiles*, and continued there two Years. It was about twenty-eight Years after *Christ's* Ascension, when *St. Paul* was brought Prisoner first to *Rome*. Here ends the History of the *Acts*.

The Church Writers give us some farther Account of *St. Paul's*, and other Apostles Travels up and down the World, in propagating the Gospel. They converted many Countries; the Lord *Jesus* assisting them from Heaven, and the Holy Spirit comforting them in all their Troubles, and enabling them with Power and Efficacy to publish the glad Tidings of Salvation; so that in less than

(s) *Acts* xxi. 17.  
of the *Acts*.

(t) In *Chap.* xxi. 17. to the End

than forty Years Space, the Gospel was preached throughout all the then known World. At length they sealed their Doctrine with their Blood, all of them in one Place or other suffering Death, except St. *John*, who also was condemned, and cast into a Vessel of boiling Oil, but miraculously delivered.

The holy Apostles, like their blessed Master the Lord Jesus, bearing their Cross here, and fulfilling their Ministry, obtained a Crown of eternal Life.

Among other Countries, our *British* Isles were early enlightened, and blessed with the Knowledge of the Gospel of Salvation; and that by the Preaching of some one of the Apostles, as the Ancients affirm (*u*). However, it was in the Apostolical Times, O! Let us adore and praise God for his infinite Goodness towards us, and yield ourselves as that *good Ground*, on which the Word of Life is sown, that we may *bring forth good Fruit* unto eternal Bliss. *Amen.*

## C H A P. X.

### *Observations on the ACTS of the Apostles.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**H A T the all-wise and powerful God brought to pass his Design, in publishing the Gospel, and propagating the Christian Religion, notwithstanding all the Power and Malice, and Violence of the unbelieving *Jews*, or the *Gentiles*; and that without any human Assistance, or Force of Arms, any Conquests over foreign Countries, or the Death of its Enemies; but by the Suffer-

(*u*) Euseb. Demonstr. Evangel. l. 3. c. 7. apud Sillingfleet's Orig. Britan. c. 1. p. 35.



Sufferings of its blessed Author himself, and most of those who bare witness to it; which is a good Evidence, that Christ is that *stone cut out of the mountain without hands* (x), because he it was who set up his spiritual Kingdom without any earthly Means. Here also we see from what small Beginnings the Christian Church was at first established in the World; viz. From one hundred and twenty assembled in an (y) *upper Room*, which so increased, that one of the Ancients, in the very next Age to the Apostles, mentioned (z) the Churches of *Germany, Gaul, Spain, the East, Egypt, Libya*, besides *Jerusalem*, and the Countries near it; and this was according to our Saviour's Parable relating hereunto (a), that *the kingdom of heaven*, or the propagating of the Gospel, was *like a grain of small mustard-seed* growing up to a great tree (as in those Countries it did) (b). So that nothing can be more evident, than that this Effect of preaching the Gospel was truly miraculous, and the Work of God. It is true, when the Principles of a Religion are suited to the Lusts and Interests, and Wishes of Men, as were those of the Impostor *Mahomet*, it comes so recommended, that it is no Wonder it should be greedily received; or when the Doctrine is supported by Persons in Power and Authority, and is either forced on Men by Threats and Punishments, or makes its Way by Rewards and Interests (as the *Mahometan* Religion did) the Cause of its spreading may easily be accounted for; but when on the contrary, the Doctrine appears harsh to Mens Natures, and they are before-

(x) In *Dan.* ii. 34, 35. (y) *Chap.* i. 13, 15. See what is said of the Upper Room, on *Dan.* vi.  
 (z) *Irenæus*, l. i. c. & Not. *ibid.* (a) *Matt.* xiii.  
 (b) *Lightfoot* Hor. in *Matt.* xiii. 32.

beforehand forewarned of the Danger of entertaining it, with the Loss of whatever conduces to the outward Comforts of Life, or even Life itself; and also the Promoters of such Doctrine appear mean and contemptible, and, instead of obtaining Help from, are by all possible Methods opposed by the Powers of the World, and those who are eminent either for Authority or Learning, as was the Case of the Gospel; the Divine Power and Virtue must be supposed to attend its Progress.

And farther, this suggests to us a plain Confirmation of the Truth of the Miracles being wrought by the Apostles, in their first planting of the Gospel of Christ (and they who are not convinced of the Truth of them, must allow it to be the greatest Miracle that ever it was planted at all); for as the very Being of the World when created, is a Proof that it was at first miraculously created; so this wonderful Spreading of the Profession of the Gospel, is equally a Proof that it was miraculously propagated; otherwise it was not possible it should be so speedily and effectually done, considering the Nature of the Religion, the Weakness of the Instruments in themselves, and the Opposition made against them.

2dly, That God's best Servants may undergo much Trouble in this World; witness the Labours and Afflictions of the Apostles.

3dly, We learn here the Establishment and Practice of the first Christian Church, the Members whereof were entered into the Church by *Baptism*; they had *publick Prayers*, and *Preaching*, and *praised God*; they frequently celebrated the Lord's Supper, or *breaking Bread*; they maintained *Union, continuing stedfast in the apostles doctrine*

*doctrine and fellowship* ; and were exceeding *charitable* in relieving the Poor (*b*).

*4thly*, As there was a distinct Order of Men under the *Mosaic* Dispensation to execute the Office of the Priesthood ; *Moses*, having his immediate Commission from God Himself, was commanded to consecrate *Aaron* and his Sons for the Priest's Office (*c*) : So there was from the Beginning a distinct Order of Persons under the Gospel Ministration ; for the Apostles fixed a settled Ministry, *ordaining elders in every church* (*d*). And as the Apostles ordained certain Persons to the Pastoral Office ; so they gave them Power of ordaining others ; whereby due Care was taken, from the Beginning of Christianity, for a Supply of Persons in the Ministry for the future, by Ordination, or laying on of Hands, and Prayer, as the Necessity of the Church should require (*e*). And this solemn Ordination was performed, notwithstanding the immediate Appointment of the Holy Ghost (*f*) ; whereby it appears, *1st*, That an outward visible Calling and Ordination of Ministers is necessary ; and, *2dly*, That the Bishops and Pastors of the Church, however restrained or limited in respect of the Manner of exercising their Ministerial Function by human Governors, do yet derive their Authority, not from the People, or the Civil Magistrate, but from Christ and his Apostles. This will appear more fully, if we farther consider the first Beginning or Incorporating of the Christian Church, which was by a Divine Commission to the Apostles, authorizing them to teach

(*b*) See especially *Chap. ii. 41, to the End*, compared with *Chap. viii. 12*, and *Chap. xx. 7*. (*c*) *Exod. xxviii. 1*.

(*d*) *Acts xiv. 33*. compare *Acts xi. 30*. and *James v. 14*.

(*e*) *2 Tim. ii. 2 Tit. i. 5*. (*f*) *Acts xiii. 2, 3*.



teach and convince Men, and then to admit them into the Christian Society or Church by Baptism, and to settle them as an Ecclesiastical Body or Society (g); which Society the Apostles call *the Body of Christ*, as being united to Him the Head, by whose Authority it was at first established: So again (h), *Ye are God's Household, ye are God's Building, &c.* incorporated and built up by the Apostles, who received their Authority and Power therein from Christ.

In the next Place, as the Christian Church first began, so without the Continuance of the same Divine Authority by which it first began, it cannot continue to be a Christian Church according to Christ's original Institution; nor can the Members of it continue to be entitled to those divine Privileges, which upon its first Incorporation were annexed to it, as to be in Covenant with God, and thereby have a Title to the Graces of the Spirit, and Hopes of eternal Life; no more than a Corporation, at first established by the King's Charter, can continue to be the same Corporation, and enjoy the same Privileges, without the Continuance of the same Royal Authority by which it was incorporated at the first. And therefore the Apostles divine Authority in gathering, incorporating, and settling the Church, could not expire with their Persons, because those divine Offices, by which the Christian Society or Church subsists, cannot be duly and regularly performed, without a divine Authority in the Ministers officiating therein; as in preaching, and reconciling Men to God, admitting them into his Church, and making them solemn Promises in his Name, and sealing to them the New Covenant with God, through Christ in the Sacraments, &c. Hence they

(g) *Matt.* xxviii. 17, &c. (h) *Eph.* ii. 20.

they are stiled *Ambassadors for Christ* (i); *The ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God* (k): And Christ gave some *pastors and teachers for the work of the ministry* (l). So that it cannot be lawful for any to take upon themselves this Office, unless they be first lawfully called thereto: For how can any be Christ's Ambassadors, and transact in his Name, unless they receive Authority from him, and are sent by him? Again, since the Office of the Priesthood is as sacred as ever, no Reason can be assigned why a divine Commission is not still as necessary as at the Beginning; and therefore for any others who are not sent (m), to invade the Priesthood, and thrust themselves upon the Performance of Ministerial Divine Offices, is as much contrary to the Design of the Gospel, as it was for a Layman to offer Sacrifice under the Law. The *Deacons* in the Primitive Church were indeed to take care of the Poor, as hath been said; but that was not their whole Employment, they did also preach the Gospel, as did *Stephen* (n), and *Philip*; (o) for which Purpose they were to be Persons full of the Holy Ghost, and Wisdom (p), and were ordained to that Office, as well as others of the Ministerial Function (q), and the Distinction of *Clergy* and *Laity* is as old as the first Age of Christianity (r).

It

- (i) 2 Cor. v. 20. (k) 1 Cor. iv. 1. (l) Eph. iv. 11, 12.  
 (m) Rom. x. 15. (n) Chap. vi. 8, &c. (o) Chap. viii. 12.  
 (p) Chap. vi. 3. (q) Ver 6.  
 (r) Clem. Rom. Epist. ad Corinth, c. 40, 41. Ignatius pas-  
 sim. Cyr. Epist. 30. Obj. 1. Pet. v. 3. *All Christians are  
 called God's Heritage, or Clergy, την κληρον.* Ans. *This is no  
 more than what is said of the People of Israel, Deut. iv. 20.  
 that they were God's Inheritance, or peculiar People; that is, in  
 Opposition to the Heathen; and yet God had his peculiar  
 κληρον, his Priests among his People.*

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It hath been objected against one of the Offices, *viz. Preaching*, that there is no Necessity for it now, when all People own the Profession of Christianity among us, although it was needful when the Christian Doctrine was not well known or understood in the World: But then it is to be observed, that Christ did not only appoint Preachers for the Conversion of Infidels, but also *Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ* (r). Therefore, as long as the Church is in its *imperfect* State, as long as it may want Unity or Knowledge, or Improvement, this Office of Teachers is to continue; which is profitable in its Degree, for the same Ends for which the Holy Scripture is useful; *viz. for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Instruction in Righteousness* (s). Some are fallen into Errors, others into Troubles; some forget God, and their Souls, and others run on in Sin: So that there will always be Occasion to instruct and reclaim, to support, awaken, and encourage.

And for the *People*, it appears from what has been said, that they had no common Right or Practice in preaching or administering the Sacraments with the Ministers in the Times of the Apostles. Some Texts of Scripture have been misapplied in this respect; for Instance, St. Paul in those Words (t), *Not forsaking the assembling of your selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, &c.* does not suppose the

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O

Laity

(r) *Eph.* iv. xi, &c.

(s) 2 *Tim.* iii. 16.

(t) *Heb.* x. 25.



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Laity as much bound to *exhort*, or speak in the publick Assemblies, as to *assemble*; so long as, here we see, there were Pastors sent, and commissioned, and appointed to preach and exhort *ministerially*; but the People should exhort and encourage each other by mutual Acts of charitable Piety, and by way of brotherly Communication; and in particular, encouraging each other to persevere in the Faith, and in the *assembling themselves together*, not drawing back from Christianity, and returning to the Worship of the Synagogue, for fear of Persecution from the unbelieving *Jews*; which was the Design of the Apostle in that Place. Nor does the Apostle's forbidding the Women to teach (*u*), infer the Right of Men in common to do so; for the Context (*x*) plainly shews, the Apostle meant not the *ordinary ministerial speaking*, but *extraordinary*, by some Impulse of the Spirit of Prophecy, as was usual in those Times, although even in this Case he suffered not the Women to speak in the Congregation. So that this can only infer the Right of the Men to shew their *miraculous* Gifts in publick, but not to exercise any ministerial Office, except appointed thereunto.

As for those, who being *scattered abroad*, went *every where preaching the Word* (*y*), and those *many of the Brethren*, who were *bold to speak the word without fear* (*z*); since a settled Ministry was peculiarly appointed, it must be either understood of those Brethren, whose Province it was to preach; or they were *extraordinarily inspired*, and so had their Mission from the Holy Ghost, as *Prophets*  
or

(*u*) 1 Cor. xiv. 34.      (*x*) From Ver. 29.

(*y*) Acts viii. 4. and Chap. xi. 19.      (*z*) Phil. i. 14.

or *Evangelists* (a), to proclaim the Gospel among Infidels: For the Holy Ghost frequently fell on the first Converts. Thus, (b) *They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and spake the word with boldness.* And, (c), *The Holy Ghost came on them, and they spake with Tongues and prophesied.* From hence appears the great Mistake of those, who from extraordinary Prophets and Teachers (d) in the Beginning of Christianity (which long since have ceased) pretend a Pattern for the exercising of the ministerial Offices by any of the common People. Lastly, What St *Peter* says (e), concerning the Privileges of Christians (to whom belong the glorious Titles given formerly to the Jewish Nation (f), *Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood*) does not infer that all Christians are equally Priests and Ministers; but notes the spiritual Freedom and Liberty of Christ's Church in a figurative Expression, that it is separated from the World, and peculiarly beloved of God; as anciently the People of the Jews were. So, (g), *He hath made us kings and priests unto God:* But Christians in general are no more literally Priests, than Kings. So the same Question may still be asked now, with St. *Paul* (h), *Are all Apostles? Are all Prophets? Are all Teachers?*

5thly, As for the primitive Government of the Christian Church, and the Power of *Ordination*, or calling and sending Ministers; the Apostles, whilst they lived, did for the most part manage the Episcopacy, or the supreme Government of the

O 2

Churches

(a) Πνευματικοί.

(b) Acts iv. 31.

(c) Acts xix. 6.

(d) See the Seventh General Remark foregoing on the Acts.

(e) 1 Pet. ii. 9.

(f) Exod. xix. 6.

(g) Rev. i. 6.

(h) 1 Cor. xii. 29.

Churches themselves, presiding over those of their own Foundation. Thus St. Paul had the care of, and visited the Churches of his own planting (i), wrote Epistles to them as their spiritual Governor, and ordered the Discipline (k), and that with *Authority which the Lord had given him*. Thus also he exercised Episcopal Authority over the Elders at Ephesus, sent for them to Miletus, and gave them his Charge to perform their Duties (l); which is a Manifestation that they were under his Government. But as the Apostles withdrew, they committed the Care and Government of Churches to such Persons whom they appointed thereto. And this is so evident, that Irenæus Bishop of Lyons (who was educated under Polycarp, one of St. John's Disciples) (m) assures us, that he could reckon up the Names of those whom the Apostles had appointed Bishops in their several Churches (n). This hath been esteemed the true State of the first and Apostolical Age; of which we have an uncontrollable Evidence in Timothy and Titus, and the Angels or Bishops of the Churches in the Revelations (o). Some indeed have observed a Community of the Names Bishop and Presbyter in the New Testament, the same Persons being stiled Bishops and Elders, or Presbyters (p). But then they were as yet under the Care and Government of the Apostles; for this Community of Names was proper to the Apostolical Times, whilst the Apostles themselves

(i) Acts xv. 36. 2 Cor. xi. 28.

(k) 1 Cor. v. 1. to 8. 2 Cor. ii. 6. (l) Acts xx. 17, &c.

(m) Cave's Life of Irenæus.

(n) Irenæus, l. 3. c. 3. See also l. 4. c. 63. and l. 5. c. 20.

(o) See the first Observation on Timothy and Titus, and the second Observation on the Revelations.

(p) As they conjecture from Phil. i. 1. Titus i. 5, 7.



themselves kept the greatest Part of Episcopal Authority in their own Hands : And even then, supposing Bishops or Elders and Deacons should signify mere Presbyters and Deacons, there were yet three Orders in the Church, *Apostles, Presbyters and Deacons* ; but then, as the Apostles were withdrawn, and so the Name of an Apostle began to be laid aside [out of Reverence to the Apostles] the Name of Bishops was appropriated to their Successors in their Supremacy ; and Things are more ancient than the Names they are called by. So that we may allow for the Community of Names between *Bishop* and *Presbyter* for a while in the Church ; that is, while the Apostles governed the Churches themselves (as under the Law, both the High Priest and the Priests of inferior Order were called by the common Name of *Priests*) (*p*), but afterwards, that which had been Part of the Apostolical Office became the Episcopal, which hath continued to this Time in the Christian Church. Insomuch that *Ignatius* Bishop of *Antioch* (who had conversed with the Apostles, and was a Disciple of St. *John* (*q*), and died within ten Years after him) mentions the three distinct Orders : By *Damus your excellent Bishop, and Bassus and Apollonius your Presbyters, and Socio your Deacon* (*r*). To which may be added farther, that however in the New Testament Bishops and Presbyters might be called by the same Name, yet the Power and Right of ordaining others was in the Hands of those who were superior to Presbyters (*s*).

O 3

6thly,

(*p*) Lev. i. 7, 8.

(*q*) Cave's *Life of Ignatius*.

(*r*) Epist. ad Magnel. § 2, 6. and Trall. §. 2.

(*s*) *Bishop Beveridge's Codex Can. Eccles. prim. l. 2. c. 11.*  
and *Bishop Potter's Government of the ancient Church*.

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6t**h**ly, The *Jewish* Circumcision, and other legal Institutions, as being Types and Shadows, were abolished, or rather ceased of themselves, by Christ's Coming, who was the Substance; and therefore ought not to have been *imposed as necessary* (t). St. Paul indeed circumcised *Timothy*, that he might accommodate himself to the *Jews* at that Time, the better to prevail upon them, who would not otherwise have conversed with him (u); and on other Occasions, he complied with them to *gain them*; but when the Judaizing Christians urged the Necessity of the *Mosaical* Institutions, in order to Salvation under the Gospel, this he could by no means allow; for that would have supposed that the Messiah (who was the Substance of what those Ordinances were but as Shadows) was not yet come (x). The Temple Worship continued to the Destruction of *Jerusalem*, and the Apostles and Evangelists complied (as far as they could consistently with preaching up Jesus) with that Worship and the Law of *Moses* (y), that thereby they might the more easily convert the *Jews*, and keep them from relapsing into *Judaism* again; for the *Jewish* Christians were wont to continue *zealous of the Law*, even after their Conversion (z), till by degrees they came more perfectly to understand the Gospel Ministration. It was also fit that the Ceremonial Law and Worship, which was at first established by God himself, and in its Season ordained for the spiritual Remedy and Salvation of the *Jews*, should not (like the idolatrous  
Worship

(t) Chap. xv. (u) Chap. xvi. 3. (x) Compare Chap. xxi. 20, &c. and 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21, 22. with Gal. v. 1, &c. and Ephes. ii. 15. (y) Acts ii. 46. and xxi. 23, 24) (z) Acts xxi. 20, 21.

Worship of the Heathen) be presently condemned as impious and destructive; but go off by Degrees, and be the more decently extinguished.

7thly, As it hath been said before (a), that the *Jews* were wont to receive Profelytes, not only by Circumcision, but also by baptizing them; so it is farther evident, that their Custom was (b), when the Parents were made Profelytes, and baptized, to baptize their Children too: And this was so common, that they made a Rule, in case a Woman with Child were made a Profelyte, and so baptized; then, that Child, when born, had no farther Need to be baptized afterwards; otherwise it should. Now since we find that the Apostles baptized Persons who believed in Christ with their Families, as *Lydia* and *her household* (c), and the Keeper of the Prison, who being converted, was baptized, *he and all his*; though it be not expressed that Infants were in these Families (as most probably they were in some or other of them) yet since they were wont to be admitted to the Seal of the Covenant, by being circumcised and baptized among the *Jews*, when their Parents were Profelytes; unless it had been expressly explained otherwise in the Scripture, how can we understand, but that the Apostles did baptize them with their believing Parents? For such Infants are within the Covenant, and called (d) *holy* by St. Paul (e), on the Account of their Parents *believing*, and being Members of the Church. The two principal Ends of the Institution of Baptism, are answered by the

O 4

Baptism

(a) In the tenth Remark on the holy Gospels, § 4.

(b) Lightfoot Hor. in *Matt.* iii. 6.

(c) *Acts* xv. xvi. and *ver.* 33.

(d) See the 11th Observation on 1 Cor.

1 Cor. vii. 14.



Baptism of Infants ; *viz.* their being visibly admitted Members of Christ's Church, and a Title being conveyed to them in this Laver of Regeneration, to the sanctifying Graces of the *Holy Spirit*. So that in short, since Children are declared by Christ to have a Title to *the Kingdom of Heaven*, and as such were brought to him, and blessed by him (f) ; and St. Paul declares those of Believing Parents to be *Holy*, or within the Covenant ; since it was the Method among the *Jews* to instruct Persons of Age, and make them Profelytes, and then to admit their Children also by Baptism ; and lastly, since Christ gave a general Commission to *disciple Him all Nations, baptizing them*, without excepting Infants (g) : It cannot be understood, but that the Apostles did proceed in making Profelytes to Christianity, in the same Manner as the *Jews* were wont to do in making their Profelytes to *Judaism* ; *viz.* by informing and convincing grown Persons, and baptizing them on their Faith and Repentance ; and likewise, baptizing the Children also of the Faithful, as being within the Covenant, and therefore to be received into the Christian Church by Baptism, as well as Infants were wont to be received into the *Jewish* Church by Circumcision. As for the Primitive Church, we are assured it was of general Practice from some of the earliest Writers (h).

8thly, *Set Forms* of publick Prayer and Thanksgiving are warranted by the Practice of St. Paul, who used to frequent the Synagogue of the *Jews* (i), as it had been the *Custom* of Christ so to do.

(f) *Mark* x.

(g) *Matt.* xxviii. 19.

(h) Forbesij *Instructiones Historic. Theol.* l. 10. c. 5. *Num.* xiv, &c. Mr. Wall's *History of Infant Baptism*. Mr. Bingham's *Orig. Eccles. Book* 11. §. 5, &c.

(i) *Acts* xiii. 14. and xviii. 4.

do (k). Now, the *Jews* had (l) in their Synagogues, in those Times, stated Forms of Prayer and Thanksgiving, which Christ and St. *Paul* most assuredly joined with them in, when they frequented their Synagogues, at the accustomed Times of Divine Service ; and if Forms of Prayer were either not *lawful*, or not *convenient*, especially in the publick Service, no Doubt but that both Christ and his Apostles would have caution'd the Church against them.

9thly, The Gifts of the Apostles and Evangelists were extraordinary and miraculous, and plainly convincing. They did not barely pretend an Inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but (as Christ Himself had done before) shewed their Credentials, and God's Seal, by speaking divers Languages, and working Miracles ; and therefore, those who pretend to the extraordinary Gifts of understanding the Scripture, and teaching others, without the ordinary Means of Study and Learning, ought to confirm the Truth of such Pretensions, by Healing Diseases, Raising the Dead, and such like, as the Apostles did, or they ought not to be believed ; because, without such Demonstration of their extraordinary Mission, they presumptuously pretend to a greater Character than Christ or his Apostles did ; seeing without such Signs they would not require Mens Belief. It is also farther to be considered, that, if every one who pretends to Inspiration is to be hearkened to, we should be continually exposed to many Delusions, since different Persons have pleaded Inspiration for Doctrines contrary to one another ; and therefore great Care is to be taken, that the Wanderings of Mens  
own

(k) *Matt.* iv. 23. *Luke* iv. 16. and xii. 9.

(l) See Remark X. on the Gospels, Num. iii.

own Fancies, be not mistaken for the Inspiration of God's Spirit, either by themselves or others. All ought to allow this solid Truth; *viz.* whatsoever inward Motion is inconsistent with, or contrary to any Doctrine of the Holy Scripture, it cannot proceed from the Spirit of God, because the Scripture was at first inspired by the same Divine Spirit; and He is still the same, and cannot contradict Himself (as we are particularly put in mind) (*m*). So that all those who teach any Doctrine contrary to the Doctrine already revealed, and who deny any Gospel Ordinance, as the Orders of Ministers, the Sacraments, &c. ought to consider what Spirit they are of, since it is plain they have not the Spirit of God.

But some have applied to themselves the Prophecy of *Joel* (*n*): *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophecy —, and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit.* Such would be convinced of their Mistake, if they would attend to the Explanation St. *Peter* gives of that very Prophecy; *viz.* that by it were foretold the miraculous Gifts of Tongues and Languages, bestowed on the Apostles, and some others of the first Christians, in order to convince the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, at the first publishing of the Gospel, and that that Prophecy was then fulfilled (*o*). *This is that* (or the Completion of that) *which was spoken by the Prophet Joel, and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God* (that is, in the Times of the Messiah or Christ) *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c.* upon Persons of all Nations, Ranks, and Sexes, as was in that Age miraculously effected;

(*m*) *Mal.* iii. 6. *Heb.* xiii. 8.      (*n*) *Chap.* ii. 29.

(*o*) *Acts* ii. 16, 17.



fectcd ; and when the Pretenders to the Spirit now-a-days, can give the same Evidence the Apostles did, of the fulfilling of this Prophecy, we may allow them the same Credit. In like Manner, Christ promised his immediate and extraordinary Assistance to His Apostles, when they should be at any Time delivered up to Governors for His Sake (p). *It shall be given you in that same hour, what ye shall speak ; for it is not ye that speak (of your own Ability) but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you :* But those who pretend or expect the like Powers, now such extraordinary Gifts are ceased, may as well pretend or expect to speak with Tongues, cast out Devils, and heal Diseases, as the Apostles did by Virtue of the same Assistance. Lastly, Some ignorant Persons lay claim to the Prophecy (q) which Christ repeats (r): *They shall be all taught of God ;* which Prophecy was by *Isaiah* applied to the *Setting up of Christ's Kingdom*, and is particularly explained (s), to be meaned of being *taught of God, through Christ's revealing to us the Will of His Father*, which we are to come unto Him for.

Thus also (t), *They shall not teach every man his neighbour, all shall know me from the least to the greatest*, appertains to the New Covenant in Christ (u), under which God's Laws should be more plainly revealed, as to the Spiritual Design of them, and that inward Purity they should teach, more agreeable to the *Minds and Hearts* of Men, and as if *written* therein : So, a clear Revelation of God's Will is expressed, as being  
in

(p) *Matt.* x. 19, 20.

(q) *Isa.* liv. 13.

(r) *John* vi. 45.

(s) *John* vi. 44, 45, 46.

(t) *Heb.* viii. 11. from the Prophet *Jer.* xxxi. 33, &c.

(u) As the Context shews, *Vér.* 8, 9, 10.

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in the *Hearts* of the *Israelites* (x), or plainly taught by *Moses* ; but yet the *Laws* of God are more evidently taught by the *Apostles*, as to their *Spiritual* Design, than was under the *Old Covenant*, which God made with the *Israelites* when He delivered them *out of the Land of Egypt* (y); that is, than by the *Letter* of the *Law* of *Moses*. This *Promise*, more immediately made to the *House of Israel*, and the *House of Judah* (z), may possibly be more compleatly made good at the general *Conversion* of that *People*.

*Lastly*, The *Places* of *Scripture* mentioned by some, for the justifying their *Pretence* of more immediate *Assistance* of the *Holy Spirit*, in qualifying them for understanding and teaching the *Will* of God, either intend the *extraordinary and miraculous* *Spiritual* Gifts vouchsafed to the *Apostles*, and some others, at the first publishing of the *Christian Religion*, being that *Unction from the Holy One*, or *Anointing* which they had received (a); or else, an *Enlightening* the *Understanding* by the *Divine Spirit*, the better to apprehend the *Truths already revealed by God* in the *Holy Scriptures*; but there is no *Promise* of any different *Light* or *Inspiration*, inconsistent with, much less in *Opposition* to the same *Scriptures*.

*Thus much for the Acts of the Apostles.*

(x) *Deut.* xxx. 14.

(y) *As Ver.* 9. of this viiiith Chapter to the *Hebrews*.

(z) *Ver.* 8. (a) 1 *John* ii. 20, 27.

C H A P. XI.

*The EPISTLES.*

**C**ONCERNING the *Epistles*, we may *Remark 1st*, That there were particular Occasions of writing some of them, from the Condition and State of the Churches, and by Reason of some Disputes in those Times, and of some particular Cases in which the Christians desired to be resolved (*b*). And therefore, the best Way to understand any Part of these *Epistles*, is to observe what appears to be the Occasion or chief Design of them. The Want of attending to this Rule, has caused many and great Errors: For to pick out a *Verse* or two, and criticise on a Word or Expression, and ground a Doctrine thereon, without considering the main Scope of the Epistle, and the Occasion of writing it, is just as if a Man should interpret ancient Statutes, or Records, by two or three Words or Expressions in them, without regard to the true Occasion upon which they were made, and without any Manner of Knowledge and Insight into the History of the Age in which they were written. It is manifest this would cause great Mistakes.

*Second Remark.* Notwithstanding the particular Occasion of some of the Epistles, they are all of general Use for the whole Church at all Places, and at all Times, by the providential Designment of the Holy Ghost; because in them many of the fundamental *Doctrines* of Christianity, and the Mysteries of our holy Religion, are enlarged on; such

(*b*) See 1 Cor. i. ii. vii. i. and viii. i.



such as the Resurrection from the Dead, the Design and Use of the blessed Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the Meaning of many dark Prophecies concerning Christ in the Old Testament, the Atonement for our Sins by the Sacrifice of the Blood of the Son of God, &c.

Seeing many of the Christian Doctrines are not so fully and particularly explained in the Gospels, it is evident the Apostles were instructed by the Holy Ghost, to write these Epistles; which, together with the Gospels, were to make up the compleat Rule of the Christian Faith.

Again, in these Epistles, many particular Christian *Duties* are more fully treated of; as Love and Charity, Justice, Mercifulness and Pity, Patience, Contentedness, Temperance, Devotion, and the public Worship of God, &c. And also a Christian Behaviour in several Conditions and Relations; as of Kings and their Subjects, Fathers and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants: In short, the Epistles more at large shew us the Life and Spirit of Christianity; viz. that it consists in nicely avoiding all Sin and Impurity, in living above the World, and exercising the Duties of a heavenly Conversation, having a stedfast Faith in Christ's Merits, and being supported under all Difficulties and Sorrows, with the joyful Hope of eternal Life. And we cannot but adore the Goodness and Providence of God, that such Occasions were given for the writing the Epistles, in which the Holy Spirit, by the Apostles, instructed the Church, as might be both useful at that Time, and also in all Ages, to the World's End.

*Third*

*Third Remark.* The Churches were already founded when the Epistles were written; and therefore, we cannot expect in them all the Particulars which concern the Discipline and Government of the Church, nor all the Circumstances of Religious Worship: Such Matters the Apostles ordered themselves in Person (*a*). So that we are not to reject the Injunctions of the Governors of the Church, in Things indifferent, if they tend to promote Decency, Order, and Edification; on Pretence we do not find those particular Observances to be mentioned in the Epistles. This *Remark* does also instruct us the more to esteem the Accounts which the most Primitive Fathers give concerning the Customs of the ancient Church, from the Beginning of Christianity; which we have Reason to apprehend were agreeable to the *Ordinances* which were delivered to the Churches by the Apostles.

*Fourth Remark.* There were some dangerous Opinions spread about, which the Holy Ghost, by the Apostles, had often respect to, whether forged by *Simon Magus*, the Sorcerer and Magician above-mentioned, or others who had very much corrupted the Christian Religion, by bringing in the most destructive Principles and Practices (*b*); such as the Worshipping Angels, as being the Creators of the World; the Eating of Things offered to Idols, as such; and that in a Time of Persecution it was lawful to avoid Danger, though by renouncing the Christian Faith, and sacrificing to Idols; that good Works were a Bondage, not agreeing

(*a*) 1 Cor. xi. 2, 34. Tit. i. 5.

(*b*) Irenæus, l. i. c. 20. & Not. Grabe ibid. Confer Cave St. Paul, §. 9. and Whitby in Coloss. ii. 18.

agreeing to their Christian Liberty and Privileges ; and that they might take their Liberty of doing what pleased and delighted themselves, though it were sinful.

And as these Heretics pleaded for Sin and Debauchery, so others of them pretended (*c*) more than ordinary Severities and Mortifications of the Body, and an Abstinence from lawful Things ; as Marriage, and eating Flesh, &c. according to the Discipline of some particular Societies of Men in those Times among the *Jews* and *Heathens*. Now these Heretics contended that Christians should imitate them in this, in order to the perfecting their Religion, and rendering themselves the more acceptable to God. The Apostles, in many of their Discourses, had an Eye to these Principles and Practices. For Example (*d*) ; against worshipping Angels (*e*) ; against Idols and their Offerings (*f*) ; about holding fast the Faith, and not drawing back for Fear (*g*) ; against the Debauches and Vices of those Heretics ; and (*h*) against the Pretensions of extraordinary Mortifications and Abstinence.

*Fifth Remark.* For the more particular understanding St. Paul's Discourses, we are to observe, that he lays down this as a Foundation of many of them ; viz. That our (*i*) Reconciliation with God proceeds altogether from his free Grace and Favour, in offering a New Covenant unto Mankind in Christ Jesus ;

(*c*) Hammond and Dr. Whitby in Coloss. ii. 23.

(*d*) Coloss. ii. 18. (*e*) 1 Cor. viii. and 2 Cor. vi. 16, &c.

(*f*) Heb x. 23. (*g*) Rom. xiii. 12 and 13. Phil. iii. 17, &c. Eph. v. 3 to 6. 2 Pet. ii. (*h*) Coloss. ii. 20, 21.

(*i*) Bishop Bull's Harmonia Apostolica.



Jesus ; and this leads him into a Dispute against three sorts of Persons (whereof the two first were professed Enemies of the Gospel) ; *viz.* the *Gentiles* or *Heathens*, and the unbelieving *Jews* ; the third, the *Judaizing* Christians. Against the two former he asserts, that they are not *the Works* either of the *Gentile* or the *Jew*, whether according to the Law of Nature, or the Law of *Moses*, which can *justify* ; (that is, exempt from the Punishment for past Sins, and make one accepted with God) and therefore that there is a Necessity that all, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, who would be saved, comply with the Terms of this Covenant ; *viz.* in believing Christ to be the Son of God, and the true Messiah, with a due Conformity to the Will of his heavenly Father, which he hath revealed to us (*k*).

*Sixth Remark.* A third Sort of Adversaries to the Truth of the Christian Religion, against whom *St. Paul* disputes, were the *Judaizing* Christians, that is, such as would join the ceremonial Ordinances of the Law of *Moses*, together with Faith in Christ, as being equally necessary to Salvation. For so it was, that most of those who first embraced Christianity were *Jews* : These had been brought up in a high Esteem for the Law of *Moses*, especially the Ordinance of Circumcision, with the other *Mosaical* Institutions, which they knew to be of God, and the latter Traditions of the Rabbies ; so that however they believed in Christ, yet many of them could not easily be persuaded (*a*), but that the old legal Ordinances were in Force still, nay, that the converted *Gentiles* also (especially

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those

(*k*) See, for Instance, the first Part of the Epistle to the Romans, and Eph. ii. 1. to 10. (*a*) See Acts xxi. 20.

those among them who had been Profelytes of the Gate) were bound to observe them; as hath been before remarked on the *Acts*. Hence came the Dispute, whether only the Belief and Practice of the Christian Religion, as taught by Christ and his Apostles, or else, besides that, Circumcision and other Observances of the Law of *Moses*, were necessary to Salvation. Now the setting of this right takes up a great Part of St. *Paul's* Epistles, especially those to the *Romans* and *Galatians*; it being the Christian Doctrine, that the Belief and Practice of the Christian Religion was perfectly sufficient to Salvation, without Circumcision and other Observances of the Law of *Moses*. Not but that the Apostles sometimes complied with the *Jews*, as it has been observed before, in the Use of some *Levitical* Ceremonies, the better to gain upon them (*b*). But they could not allow that, after the Manifestation of Christ, the Ceremonial Law, which was the *Shadow*, should be imposed as necessary; for that would have imported that the Messiah, who is the *Substance*, was not yet come. And besides this Argument taken from the Law's being a Shadow of Christ the Substance, the Apostle argues from (*c*) Matter of Fact (*d*), in that they had *received the Spirit*, or the miraculous Power and Gifts of the Spirit, not *by the Works of the Law*, but *by the hearing of Faith*, the hearing and embracing the Doctrine of Faith in Christ to which the Law was to give Place. [Note here, Those (whether *Jews* or *Gentiles*) who, being converted

(*b*) *Acts* xvi. 3. and xx. 20, &c. 1 *Cor.* ix. 20.

(*c*) To the same Purpose Just. Martyr argues against the *Jews*, in that the Spirit did no more visibly operate among them, but in the Christian Church. Trypho, p. 248, 264.

(*d*) *Gal.* iii. 2.

converted Christians, did yet plead for imposing the Observances of the *Mosaical* Law, are termed *Judaizers*, or *Judaizing Christians*, by the (e) Antients ; and therefore are so called in some of the following Papers.]

These two last Remarks explain what St. *Paul* means by saying, that we are *justified by Faith, not by Works*, or *without the Deeds of the Law* (f), namely, not that good Works are unnecessary for Christians to Salvation ; for we have seen in *Christ's* Sermon, and other Parts of the Gospel, that it is in vain to hope for Acceptance, without doing the Will of our Heavenly Father : But when the Apostle opposes Works to Faith, by *Works* sometimes he means the *Merit* of Obedience, by Virtue of any Covenant of Works, which neither *Jew* nor *Gentile* can boast of, being all Sinners ; and what Good is done, is through the Gift and Grace of God. But very often by *Works*, the Apostle intends the *Ceremonial Laws and Ordinances* set down in *Exodus* and *Leviticus* ; which the *Jews* so much depended on, and so highly valued. And therefore it is observable, that the Works which St. *Paul* excludes from Justification are by him stiled either simple *Works*, or else *Works of the Law*, but never *good Works* : Of these last he says on the contrary, *We are created in Christ Jesus unto good Works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them* (g). And when the Apostle saith, *Faith* justifies, he does not mean a bare believing the Truth of Christianity without a holy Life ; but thus, That we ought

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not

(e) Ignat. Epist. ad Magnes. Num. 10. 'Ιουδαϊζόντες. Sic Hieronymus, in Isa. lib. 1. & alibi, Judaizantes.

(f) As Rom. iii. 38. Gal. ii. 16. and often to the same Purpose. (g) Eph. ii. 9, 10.



not to pretend to Justification by Virtue of any Covenant of Works, and the Merit of them, nor depend on the Law of *Moses*, after the Manner of the *Jews*; but if we believe in Christ, and take him for our Lord, by living according to the Gospel, this will justify us, or make us accepted with God for eternal Salvation; or in the Apostle's Words (*b*), *In Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by love.*

Again; Hence we see how to reconcile St. *Paul* and St. *James*, though they seem to differ. For when St. *Paul* saith, that *we are justified by Faith without the deeds of the law*, he is disputing against *Heathens*, and the unbelieving *Jews* and *Judaizers*, and means such a Faith as hath been mentioned; that is, believing in Christ, and taking him for our Lord, by living as he hath taught us, without the Pretence of the Merit of Works, and especially the Works of the *Jewish* Ceremonial Law: And when St. *James* saith, that *faith without works is dead* (*i*), he is disputing against other Sort of Adversaries than St. *Paul* did; viz. such Heretics of his Time, who denied the Necessity of good Works, as if only their Belief in Christ would save them; and therefore he by *Works* means the Works enjoined by Christ and his Apostles in the Gospel, as the Condition on our Part; without which our Faith is dead, and prevails nothing. So that both the Propositions are true, Faith without Works justifies us; and Faith without Works will not justify us. But then we must observe, that St. *Paul* and St. *James* are disputing about two different Things; St. *Paul* concerning *Faith*, as it is taken for the whole Christian Religion, in Opposition to any other,

(*b*) *Gal. v. 6.*    (*i*) *James ii. 14.*

other, especially the *Mosaical*; affirming, that we are justified by that alone, not by either the *Natural* or *Judaical*: But St. *James* discourses concerning *Faith*, as it signifies the Profession of the Gospel, in Opposition to the Works required in the Gospel, or the Duties of Christian Piety: That Faith or Profession alone, he says, will justify no Man before God, without a holy Life suitable to that Profession, and which proceeds from a true Faith. And the Term *Works* is also used in different Senses; *Faith without Works*, justifies us, says St. *Paul*; that is, Christianity without Pretence of Merit, and without Circumcision and the other *Mosaical* Ordinances: And Faith without Works will not justify us, says St. *James*; that is, not without the Works of a holy, religious Conversation, according to the Gospel: Which St. *Paul* earnestly presses (*k*). Farther, it is to be observed, that even the Works under the Gospel (*l*), do not justify us (by procuring Pardon of Sins, and making us accepted with God) as being *meritorious in themselves*; but as being the *Terms* of the New Covenant in Christ Jesus, and the *Condition* upon which we are made Partakers of the Merits of Christ.

*Seventh Remark.* There was a Dispute at the Time of writing the Epistles, about the *Gentiles* having an Interest in the Messiah, and being Members of the Church of God, which hath been spoken of before in the *Acts of the Apostles*. Now seeing the *Jews* would not easily own the *Gentiles* Title, therefore the Apostles frequently mention it (*m*). One particular Sign of the Acceptance of

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the

(*k*) Rom. xii, &c. (*l*) Mentioned James ii. 24.

(*m*) Rom. ix. 10, 11. Gal. iii. Eph. iii. 6, 9, 11.

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the *Gentile* Christians was, that the Holy Spirit, which formerly manifested himself among the *Jews*, had now deserted them, and was powerful among Christians (*n*), where the Apostle argues against the *Judaizing* Christians, that they *received the Spirit by the hearing of Faith* (the Doctrine of Christianity) *not by the Works of the Law*. To the same Purpose the primitive Fathers argued, as it hath been observed before. Hence the Church of God is compared to an *Olive-tree*; the unbelieving *Jews* were the *Branches broken off*, and the believing *Gentiles* are the *Branches grafted* into the old Stock: So that properly it is but one Church of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and *Abraham* is our Spiritual Father (*o*).

*Eighth Remark.* As in the Gospels, the Expression of *Christ's Coming*, &c. signifies his coming to Judgment on the *Jews* (see *Seventeenth Remark* on the Gospels) so the like Phrase in the Epistles is often to be understood to have Relation to the Destruction of the *Jewish* Nation and People; whereby the first Christians, being generally persecuted by the unbelieving *Jews*, might be exhorted to Meekness and Patience for the present; for that in a short Time those their Persecutors should be disabled from doing them any farther Mischief. Thus, (*p*) *Let your moderation* (yielding (*q*) Temper, Gentleness or Meekness, and Patience) *be known unto all men; the Lord is at hand*, to put an end to the *Jewish* Nation, and the Christians Troubles. So (*r*), *Be ye patient, for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh*. And (*s*), *The*

(*n*) *Gal. iii. 2.*    (*o*) *Rom. xi. 17, &c.*    (*p*) *Phil. iv. 5.*

(*q*) *Τὸ ἐν εἰρήνῃ.*

(*r*) *James v. 8, 9.*



(s), *The end of all things is at hand* (t), *As ye see the day approaching.* And, (u), *He who is coming will come, and will not tarry.* This Interpretation of the foregoing Passages, and the like, answers the Objections of some, who understanding them to have Respect to the last Day of Judgment, have thought that St. Paul and the other Apostles believed that the End of the World was nigh at hand in their Times: But the Holy Spirit taught them to affirm the Truth, and St. Paul himself intimates (x), that the Day of Christ was not nigh at hand. Again, they knew that Jerusalem was to be destroyed, and that the Gospel should be planted among the Gentiles, and that the Jews should be converted. And farther, St. Paul speaks of his own Death (y), and consequently, they did not believe that the End of the World should be in their Times. And as for the Passage (z), *Then we which are alive, and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds:* He means those of the Faithful, the Church being one Body, and those who shall be alive at the last Day, will be Fellow Members, and of the same Body with us.

On the other hand, the Phrase, *the Day of the Lord, and the Day of the Lord Jesus Christ*, in the Epistles, generally signifies the last Day of Judgment. So, (a), *That ye may be blameless in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ* (b).

*Ninth Remark.* In the Epistles, there is often Mention made of *Prophets*, and *Propheying*; which Words are diversly used; of which before

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in

- (s) 1 Pet. iv. 7. (t) Heb x. 25. (u) Verse 37.  
 (x) 2 Thess. ii. 2. (y) Phil i. 20, 21. and 2 Tim. iv. 6.  
 (z) 1 Thess. iv. 17. (a) 1 Cor. i. 8.  
 (b) So also, 2 Cor. i. 14. Phil. i. 6. 1 Thess. v. 2.

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in the *Seventh General Remark* on the *Acts*. To *prophecy*, not only signifies to foretel Things to come, but to declare the Will of God, and to expound the Mysteries of the Scriptures, by the immediate Assistance of the Holy Spirit (*c*), and sometimes to praise God with inspired Hymns or Psalms (*d*).

*Tenth Remark.* St. Paul often alludes to some Customs which were in his Time: So because the *Jews* (living in a hot Country, as did the first Christians) generally plunged the Person baptized under Water, and then raised him out of it, he says (*e*), *We are buried with Christ by Baptism, wherein also you are risen with him.* And because before Baptism their Garments were put off, and afterwards put on again, the Apostle alludes to this, when he speaks of the quitting the old Habits of Sin, and entring into a new Course of Holiness (*f*), *That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man* — and *that ye put on the new man.*

Again, Running Races was usual in St. Paul's Time, especially in the Exercises and Games celebrated at *Corinth* (*g*); therefore he compares our Christian Conversation and gaining Heaven to the running a Race, and winning the Prize (*h*). There are divers such Allusions in his Epistles. Farthermore, it was customary with the Rabbies, or Doctors of the *Jews*, to interpret (*i*) the Holy Scriptures

(*c*) 1 Cor. xiv. 3.      (*d*) Luke i. 67.      (*e*) Coloss. ii. 12.

(*f*) Eph. iv. 22, &c.

(*g*) Called *Isthmia*, from the Isthmus on which the City of Corinth was situate. See Hammond on 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25, 26, 27.

(*h*) 1 Cor. ix. 24, &c.

(*i*) Maimon. Mor. Nevoch. Pars III. c. 43. Grotius in Galat. iv. 24.

Scriptures of the Old Testament by a Figure, which is called an *Allegory*, when one Thing is expressed in Words, and another is meant ; or whereby something more is understood than is expressed. Thus it was expressed by the *Jews*, that in the Histories of the Old Testament there is, besides the historical Sense, another to be understood, which is more eminent and spiritual, and which is represented by such a History. Accordingly the Apostle understands by *Abraham's* two Wives, the two Covenants ; viz. by *Agar*, the Bond Woman, and her Son, that of the Old Law ; and by *Sarah*, the Free Woman, and her Son, that under the Gospel (*k*).

*Eleventh Remark.* People's saluting each other with a Kiss was a common Expression of mutual Kindness in the first Times of the Gospel (*l*) ; and therefore to preserve the Sense of mutual Kindness and Charity in the first Christians, the Apostles enjoined the *holy kiss*, or *the kiss of charity* (*m*), at the End of the public Prayers, and before the Sacrament, which then was a constant Part of the public Worship. The Clergy saluted their Bishop, and the Men each other of their Sex, and the Women of theirs (*n*) ; whereby the whole Assembly testified their good Will, and that they were in Charity with each other.

*Twelfth Remark.* There were generally in the Eastern Countries, not as with us, covenanted Servants,

(*k*) *Gal.* iv. 24. See also *1 Cor.* v. 7, 8. and *Chap.* x. 1. to 5.

(*l*) See *Luke* vii. 45. (*m*) *Rom.* xvi. 16. *1 Cor.* xvi. 20. *1 Pet.* v. 14.

(*n*) *Just. Martyr.* *Apol.* I. §. 85. *Edit.* Grabe, compared with *Constitutiones Ap.* l. 8. c. 11. and *Grotius* in *Rom.* xvi. 16.



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vants, but Slaves ; who were bought and sold in the Market : Thus *Joseph's* Brethren sold him to the Merchants (o), to which Christ alludes in the Parable of the Servant, who had not wherewith to pay his Debts, *His Lord commanded him to be sold, and his Wife and Children* (p). To this also the Apostle alludes (q) *Ye are bought with a price* (of the Blood of the Son of God) *therefore glorify God, &c.*

*Thirteenth Remark.* The Phrase (r) in the latter Times, and in the last Days, in the Epistles, plainly refers to the Time of the Gospel, chiefly to Christ's first Appearance, or the Beginning of Christianity ; for first, the same Phrase in the Old Testament is understood by the ancient Jews (s) to import the Days of the Messiah, and to be of the same Signification with the Word *Afterward*, in *Joel* (t). *And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c.* which St. Peter quoting, expresses by *the last days* (u). *This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, And it shall come to pass, in the last days, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c.* which both assures us, that afterwards, in *Joel*, is the same with *the last days* in the *Acts*, and also infallibly directs us to the Time expressed by *the last days*, when this Promise was to be fulfilled ; viz. in the Days of the Messiah, the Time when Christ's Kingdom, or, the Christian Church was erected. Accordingly, St. Paul, having men-  
tioned

(o) *Gen.* xxxvii. 28. See *Lev.* xxv. 39. (p) *Matt.* xviii. 25.

(q) *1 Cor.* vi. 20.

(r) See the end of the fourth Remark on the Prophets.

(s) R. D. Kimchi apud Pocock in *Mic.* ix. 1. and *Joel* ii. 29.

(t) *Joel* ii. 28. (u) *Acts* ii. 16, 17.

tioned some Things which *the Spirit speaketh expressly*, or plainly, were to come to pass *in the latter times* (x), bids *Timothy put the brethren*, then living, *in remembrance of them*, Ver. 6. which therefore must be at the Time when he wrote (y.) Here also it may be remarked, that although the Expression, *the last days*, imports the Time of the Messiah, yet it is not always limited to signify only his first Appearance ; but, with respect to the Dispensation of *Moses*, it imports all the Time, from the first Appearance of Christ, to the Day of Judgment : In this Sense the Prophecy may be understood (z) : *Afterwards the children of Israel shall seek the Lord their God, and David their king* (that is, say the *Jews* (a), Messiah the Son of *David*) *in the latter days* (b) : Whence, by the Way, we may expect that, howsoever some of the Prophecies of that Abundance of Peace and Happiness which is promised under the Messiah, are not as yet accomplished ; yet that it is sufficient, if they are made good in any Part of the Days of the Messiah, though towards the End thereof.

*Fourteenth Remark.* The *Times* of writing the Epistles are somewhat uncertain ; most of them are accounted to have been written in about thirteen Years Space ; viz. from the Year Fifty-two (that is, nineteen Years after our Saviour's Ascension) to the Sixty-fifth (c), and before the Destruction

(x) 1 Tim. iv. 1.

(y) See also Heb. i. 1, 2. James v. 3.

(z) In Hosea iii. 5. (a) Pocock in loc.

(b) See also 2 Pet. iii. 3.

(c) Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 1, &c.

struction of *Jerusalem*, in the following Order (b). Two of the Epistles; viz. 2 *Tim.* and 2 *Pet.* when the Time of that Destruction was near approaching: The Epistle of *Jude*, and the three Epistles of St. *John*, after *Jerusalem* was destroyed.

*Fifteenth Remark.* The Epistle of St. *James*; the first and second of St. *Peter*, the first of St. *John*, and that of St. *Jude*, are called *General Epistles*; because not written to any particular Church, or Country, where the Christians inhabited; but, in general, to those who were *scattered abroad*; several Copies thereof being dispersed into different Places, and especially among the dispersed *Jewish* Converts, being as it were Circular Epistles.

*Sixteenth Remark.* St. *Paul*, in the Beginning of divers of his Epistles, writes to the first Christians by the Name of (c) *Saints*; which Term, in many Places, does not import that all so called were inwardly sanctified and holy; but is of as large Signification as the Word *Christians*, in Opposition to the unconverted *Jews* and *Heathens*, and is the same with St. *Peter's* Expression (d): *Those who have obtained like precious faith with us*; that is, all professed Christians. The Term *Holy*, or *Saints*, in this Sense, seems to be borrowed from the *Jews*, who had been a *Holy People*, separated by God from the rest of the World, and so stiled themselves holy and pure, and the *Gentiles* impure.

Thus

(b) First and Second *Thess.* i. and 2 *Cor.* *Rom.* *Gal.* *Jam.* 1 *Pet.* *Philip.* *Eph.* *Col.* *Philem.* *Heb.* *Tit.* and 1 *Tim.*

(c) Lightfoot in 1 *Cor.* vii. 10.

(d) 2 *Pet.* i. 1.



Thus much for the *General Remarks* on the Epistles. Next we are to enquire into the Design and Meaning of each particular Epistle, to the Intent that, whenever any Part or Chapter thereof shall be perused, the Reader, by first looking over the Account herein given of that particular Epistle which he is about to read, and considering the *chief Scope* thereof, may the easier comprehend what is read, and know what Use to make of it.

*Design of the Epistle to the Romans, or the Church of Christ at Rome.*

THIS is placed first, not for that the Church of *Rome* in those Days, was esteemed the Mother Church, or the Bishop of it the Supream or Head over all the Christian Church; but because the City of *Rome* was the chief City, where the Emperor lived. St. *Paul* wrote this Epistle when he was at *Corinth*, a City of *Greece*; for he commendeth to them *Phæbe* of *Cenchrea*, which was a Part of *Corinth* (e): He had not been at *Rome* himself (f); but understood that the Gospel was planted there by some others, and that the Church there consisted of *Jews*, mixed with some *Gentiles* (g). How so many *Jews* came to be at *Rome*, see before concerning the Dispersions, in the *Fourth General Remark* on the *Acts*.

The Design of the Epistle appears to be this; viz. To shew the Excellency of the Christian Belief, and the Necessity all Mankind lie under of embracing the Gospel; which is *the power of God to salvation*; both to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. Particularly,

(e) Chap. xvi. 1.

(f) Chap. i. 15.

(g) Chap. i. 13.

ticularly, in the *four first* Chapters, after a Salutation, and some Expressions of Kindness, it is shewn, first; that the *Gentiles* were in a lost Condition, as to themselves; they abused the Light of Nature, when the very Works of God, which are seen, declare him to be the true God, who is the Maker of all Things; yet they were idolatrous, and worshipped and served the *Creature more than the Creator*, and gave themselves to all Impiety: So they were all under Sin, and came short of the Glory of God. And as for the *Jews*, they depended on their Circumcision (the Seal of God's Covenant) and other Observances of the Law of *Moses*; but, first of all, they were Breakers and Transgressors of that Law, and so could not on the Account of it, be righteous or acceptable with God; but were inexcusable, in judging and condemning the *Gentiles*, for transgressing the Law of Nature, when themselves were Transgressors both against the Natural and their own *Mosaical* Law. Secondly, It is not Circumcision, or other Observances of the Law of *Moses*, nor the Merit of any good Works whatever, which justifies (that is, renders a Man safe in respect of Divine Justice, and makes him accepted with God) but the free Grace and Mercy of God in entering into a Covenant with us in Christ Jesus: It is true, that the *Jews* had some Advantage, in being intrusted with the Oracles, or revealed Will of God, which the rest of Mankind were not; nevertheless, the *Gentiles* were not capable of Justification, as well as the *Jews*, by Faith, or according to the Terms of the Gospel: The Apostle instances in *Abraham* the Father of the Faithful. Now, the Faithful are justified in that Manner as he, their Spiritual Father, was; but *Abraham* was justified,

or

or received into Favour with God, not by Virtue of any Covenant of Works made with him, like those in the Time of *Moses*, or his Merit in performing them; but God, out of his free Grace, made *Abraham* Promises of Blessings, and that before he was circumcised; he, trusting upon those Promises, was justified, or accepted with God: In like Manner, we are *justified freely by his Grace, through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ*; God having, of his own free Goodness, offered a New Covenant in Christ, and if we embrace the Christian Religion, and duly receive the Promises and Precepts of the Gospel, conforming ourselves thereto, this is Faith in Christ, and what will justify us, or make us accepted of God.

Farthermore, the Apostle answers the *Jewish* Objection concerning *Abraham's Seed* after the Flesh, and proves the Believers in Christ, though they be not Natural *Jews*, are yet, by Faith, the *Spiritual Children of Abraham*, according to God's eternal Purpose, and Partakers of the Promises. This is the Substance of the four first Chapters.

Afterwards, the Apostle proceeds, *Chap v.* to shew the Benefit we have, being justified, or received into God's Favour by Faith in Christ, according to the Terms of the Gospel (of which we have more Cause to *boast* than the *Jews* can have of their Privileges) *viz.* Peace and Reconciliation with the Father, a joyful Hope of Glory (though at present under Tribulation) and the sweet Influence of the Holy Spirit, working a Sense of the Love of God in our Hearts; so that as the first Man, *Adam*, was the Fountain of (*b*) Sin and Death,

(*b*) The Apostle says, *ver. 19.* Many shall be made righteous; that is, not actually so, but placed in the State of, or dealt with



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Death, in respect to *all Men*; so the second Man, *Christ*, is the Fountain of Pardon and Life for all, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*: But then, as the Apostle goes on (*i*), Since we are all thus accepted, not for Works, but through Grace and Favour (which is manifested the more by our Sins and Unworthiness) it is not to be understood, that, under Presence of giving Opportunity for the more Favours, we may sin the more; for our very Admittance into his Grace, by Baptism, supposes a being dead to all Habits of Sin, as Christ died for Sin, and leading a new Life of Virtue, as Christ rose from the Dead.

Then (*k*), the Apostle pursues the former Subject, and shews that all Persons, and particularly the *Jews*, are now, in Christ, as free from the Law, in the Manner it was given by *Moses*, as much as a Wife is freed from Subjection to a Husband who is dead: Forasmuch as the Law, the *Oldness of the Letter*, could not enable to subdue Sin, and *bring forth* acceptable *Fruit unto God*, in such Manner as when we are guided by the *Newness of the Spirit*, the Grace and Spirit of Christ under the Gospel: However, the Law in itself is not the Cause of *Sin*, though it shews what is Sin; but a Man's own Lusts make him desirous of what the Law shews to be evil; and so he sees and knows Good, and in his Mind and Judgment desires it; but he is *sold under Sin*, and becomes a Slave to his Corruptions. Here the Apostle describes, in his own Person (to take off the Harshness and Invidiousness of the Sentence, and

*as righteous, being justified and accepted in Christ; so, all have sinned, ver. 12. and made Sinners, ver. 19. that is, dealt with as Sinners, or become mortal.*

(*i*) Chap. vi.

(*k*) Chap. vii.

and to render it less offensive) what seems to be meant, not of himself, or any other having Grace (*l*) and God's Spirit; but the *Carnal Man*, considered in his own Natural State; while under the Law, without the Grace of the Holy Spirit, under the Gospel (*m*).

Afterwards (*n*), the Apostle declares the Safety and Comfort of those, who, being through Faith the Members of Christ's Church, live according to the Gospel, and subdue their Lusts through the Spirit and Grace of Christ, and are made *the Children of God*, and *Heirs of Glory*; which the Law, as is said before, did not afford sufficient Power for. All such Christians ought to be *patient* under Troubles, which shall *work together* for their Good, and comfortably hope in God, forasmuch as it is the *Purpose*, or Decree of God, to save all those, who, being *called* by the Preaching of the Gospel, should embrace it, and live according to it, as the same Apostle, in like Manner, expresses himself, 2 *Tim.* i. 9. *Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began*; and therefore God, having *foreknown* (or approved of them as such) (*c*), hath *predestinated*, or fore-appointed them to be *confirmed*, or made like unto *his Son* here, in *Patience and Holiness*; and hereafter, in *Bliss and Glory*; which last nothing shall prevent or *separate* them from, they being such who truly love God, and express that Love by *keeping his Commandments*.

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(*l*) Grotius and Hammond in Rom. vii. 7.

(*m*) Such a Way of Speaking, see, 1 *Cor.* vi. 12, 15. and xiii. 2. *Eph.* iii. 3.

(*n*) *Chap.* viii.

(*o*) *Psal.* i. 6.

As for the Unbelieving *Jews* (*p*), who, after all, expected to be justified by the Works of the Law, and not through Faith in Christ; the Apostle expresses great Tenderneſs for them, as being a *Jew* himſelf (and therefore calls them *Brethren according to the fleſh*, and reckons their Privileges (*q*); yet for their Stubbornneſs he obſerves, that God had rejected them, in a great Meaſure, and owned the *Gentiles*; who, though not the Natural, are yet the Spiritual *Seed* of *Abraham*, and accounted the *Children of the Promise*, according to his own free Grace and Mercy: So, though *Iſhmael* was *Abraham's* Son, and elder than *Iſaac*, yet the Promise made to *Abraham* and his Son belonged to *Iſaac* and his Poſterity. Again; though *Eſau* was *Iſaac's* Firſt-born, yet the Seed of *Jacob*, who was the younger, inherited the Promise. In like manner, God doth not bind himſelf to the *Jews* only, by reaſon of their Privilege of having *Abraham* to their Father; but may, if he pleaſes, caſt them off for their Unbelief and Hardneſs of Heart, and receive the *Gentiles*.

Nor is it ſtrange, that God ſhould give up the *Jews* to the Hardneſs of their Hearts; for the Scripture acquaints us (*r*), that he had dealt ſo with *Pharaoh*, who often had hardened his own Heart; yet God *raiſed him up*, that is, to be King of *Egypt*, or *made* (*s*) *him to ſtand*, prolonged his Life, notwithstanding the Plague of Biles, that at laſt the Power and Glory of God might be more eminently ſhewn in his Deſtruction in the *Red Sea*. So the *Jews* had often been pardoned, notwithstanding their Idolatries; but now ſince they

(*p*) Chap. ix.(*q*) Ver. 4, 5.(*r*) Ver. 17, &c.(*s*) So it is in the original Hebrew of Exod. ix. 16. which the Apoſtle here quotes. See Hammond in Rom. ix. 17.



they hardened themselves against Christ the Messiah, God had cast them off, and would shew Mercy to the *Gentiles*, as the Prophets *Hosea* and *Isaiab* had foretold: For God may dispense his Favours as he pleases, like as a *Potter* makes, as he pleases, one Part of the Clay serve for a Vessel of nobler Use, and the other for a meaner.

After all, the Apostle declares (*t*), that the whole Body of the *Jews* were not so cast off, but that he prayed for their Conversion; and those who should quit their Dependance on the Law, and confess with their mouth the Lord *Jesus*, and believe in him, might be saved: And there were even then a *Remnant* of such, and there would be, in Time to come, a greater Conversion in them: Therefore the *Gentiles* ought not to insult over the *Jews*; but remember, that the Patriarchs *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob*, who were the first Fruits of the *Root*, were holy, or owned by, and separated to God; and, therefore, the whole *Lump*, or *Branches*, the Body of the *Jews* (their Offspring) may be so too: Wherefore the *Gentiles* should look on the *Jews* as the *Natural Branches*, and themselves as grafted on their Stock. Finally, the Apostle shews, that God is ready to have Mercy on all who believe in Christ, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

Thus much seems to be the chief Design of this Epistle, from the Beginning to the End of the *xith Chapter*. Thence, to the End of the Epistle, the Apostle instructs them to the Duties of a Holy Life; and earnestly presses the Observance of true Christian Behaviour; such as their employing their several Gifts and Faculties to the Good

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of the whole Church; Brotherly Love, Lowly-mindedness, Peace and Gentleness even towards Enemies, leaving Vengeance to God; Subjection to Kings and Governors, avoiding impure and debauched Practices, and bearing with each other, especially at that Time with those converted *Jews* (*u*), who were sincere Christians, but yet weak and scrupulous, as to some Things enjoined by the Law of *Moses*; namely, the Observation of the *Jewish* Festival Days, making Distinction between the clean and the unclean Meats expressed in *Moses's* Law, which they thought they were still bound to, as also to a conscientious abstaining from Meats which had been offered to Idols. These Persons were not to be despised, but received, and borne with till they were better instructed; and the confirmed Christians would do best not always to use their Liberty, in the utmost Extent of it, in Things indifferent (that is, in such Matters which the Authority of God or Man hath neither enjoined, nor condemned) but to abstain from eating what others (however weakly and erroneously) reputed unclean, rather than (*x*) by using their Liberty in eating what themselves knew to be harmless (*y*), to *put a stumbling-block, or an occasion of falling in their brother's way*; so that, either by Compliance or Imitation, he sin against his Conscience, or fall off from the Christian Faith. On the other Hand, these weak and scrupulous Christians ought not to judge others who were better satisfied: Wherefore he exhorts them (*z*), to practise Forbearance one towards another, after the Example of Christ's Behaviour; that all, both *Jews* and also the *Gentiles*, may be *fil-*  
*led*

(*u*) Mentioned *Chap.* xiv.(*x*) See on 1 Cor. viii.(*y*) See on 1 Cor. viii.(*z*) *Chap.* xv.

*led with all joy and peace in believing in Christ, who came to save both.*

*Lastly:* Since he was particularly an Apostle of the *Gentiles*, he expresses the greater Desire to see them ; and having sent Commendations to several of the Church, by Name, and once again besought them to *mark and avoid* all that should *cause Divisions* among them, he concludes,

*Observations on this Epistle to the Romans.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**HAT, even by the Light of Nature, we comprehend the Truth of the Godhead, and many of his glorious Attributes ; *for the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal Power and Godhead (a).* For Instance, the Works of the Creation prove *there is a God*: We see many wonderful Things in the World, but nothing can make itself ; otherwise it will follow, that the same Thing is, and is not, at the same Instant ; as being the Producer, and so it is ; and the Thing to be produced, and so as yet it is not. Again: We cannot but observe, as well in the Formation of our own Bodies, as in that of other Creatures, the wonderful Effects of Wisdom and Contrivance of so many Parts thereof suited to their proper Ends, and the Purposes for which they serve. But if they were so brought together by Chance, the Effect would, against all Reason, exceed the Power of its Cause ; and we may as well suppose, that rude Heaps of Timber, Stones, and other Materials, should all accidentally meet and raise up them-

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selves into a regular Building, as that the World was made by Chance or Atoms; and therefore there must be a First Power, and that is God.

So also we come to know the *Providence* of God, and his Government of the World: For he who is the Maker, must be the Supreme Lord, and so must have all Power to govern and dispose of all Things as he pleases. Again: No wise Man would build a stately House, but would also take Care to keep it in Repair; nor would God create a World, in which are so many Marks of Wisdom, Power, and Goodness, and then presently neglect and leave it to itself. But, in Fact, we find God doth not so; we see the Sun moves on daily and regularly, the Earth brings forth according to the Seasons, the Plants retain their usual Taste, Smell, Colour, and specific Virtues; the Cattle increase, and bring forth after their Kind; and we cannot understand how any of those would be, unless the same Divine Power and Wisdom, which at first created, did also uphold and govern the World. Some have fancied the Distraction, which an infinite Variety of second Causes, and the Care of all their Concernments would occasion, to be an Objection against Providence: But, as we find, among Men, a Person of larger Capacities and Powers can attend to many Things without Distraction, when those of weaker Capacities are wholly taken up with one, or few; so, if we conceive the Divine Understanding to be as far above ours, as his Power of creating the whole World, is above our weak and limited Power, we cannot think the Government of the World any Distraction to him. Lastly: As from the Works of Creation we comprehend the Truth of the Godhead and a Providence; so we also know that  
God

God is *Wise*, and *Powerful*, and *Good*, seeing those Works manifest such infinite Power and Wisdom to contrive them, and such infinite Goodness, to Mankind especially, in making so many Creatures for his Comfort and Refreshment (*b*).

2dly, That this Apostle has been misunderstood, in respect of Justifying Faith (*c*) without Works, to the Disparagement of Moral Virtues, and the Duties of Christianity : Whereas his great Design was to take off the Believing *Jews* from their relying on the Merit of any Works, especially on Circumcision, and the other Performances, or Works enjoined by the Law of *Moses* ; but not from discharging of Holy Duties required in the Gospel (*d*).

3dly, That this Apostle's Sense has not been rightly taken in another Point, about the observing, or the not observing Days, *Chap. xiv.* whence some are encouraged to slight the Holy Days anciently observed in the Christian Church, and at this Day in ours : Whereas it is plain, that the Apostle meant only the *Jewish* Feast Days, which the weak Christians, newly converted from *Judaism*, were still inclined to observe. See also the first Observation on the Epistle to the *Galatians*.

4thly, That none ought to encourage themselves, from the latter End of the seventh Chapter, in doing ill Actions on Pretence of *not allowing* them, and because they perceived some Struggle in their Minds : For there may be, indeed, a Strife between the corrupt Nature, and the Motions of God's Spirit in a Regenerate Man ; whose Actions are, it may be, mixed with some Imperfections,

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and

(*b*) Compare *Acts* xvii. 24. to 29.

(*c*) See the 5th and 6th General Remarks on the Epistles foregoing

(*d*) *Chap. iii.* 20, 24, 28, 29, 30.

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and subject to Infirmities : but here plainly seems to be described the *Carnal Man*, considered as under the Law, without the Grace of the Spirit under the Gospel ; who, knowing Good, and consenting to its Excellency, is yet in Danger of being a Slave to his sinful Appetites,

5thly, That raising Sedition and Rebellion against Kings and Governors, and encouraging Schisms and Divisions in the Church, is directly opposite to the Christian Religion, since the Apostle so earnestly and frequently urged Obedience to Governors, and Unity in the Church ; assuring us, that whosoever *resisteth* the Supreme Power, resisteth God himself, and shall receive *Damnation* ; and that such as *cause divisions, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ* (e).

### *Design of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.*

**C**orinth was the Metropolis, or chief City of *Achaia*, a Country in *Greece*. There St. Paul had planted a Christian Church (a), having resided there, and in those Parts, eighteen Months, supplying his own Necessities with working at the Trade of Tent-making, with one *Aquila*, a Jewish Convert, who was, at the same Time, at *Corinth*, with his Wife *Priscilla*. After St. Paul's Departure, the Christians of that Church were farther confirmed by one *Apollos*, a Jewish Convert also (b), St. Paul being now at *Ephesus* (c) understood that the *Corinthians* (a rich People, and noted (d) for Pride and Haughtiness) were much divided

(e) Chap. xiii. 1, &c. and xiv. 12. and xvi. 17, 18.

(a) Acts xviii. (b) Acts xviii. and Rom. xvi. 3.

(c) Chap. xvi. 8, 19.

(d) Grotius Præf. ad 1 Cor.



divided into Parties and Factions by some leading Men among them, who opposed the Apostle ; and that they were puffed up with a Conceit of their *Wisdom*, or Heathen Philosophy (*e*) and Eloquence. This gave Occasion for what is said in the *four First Chapters* ; wherein the Apostle reproves them for their Divisions and Factious Siding with some Teachers more than others, and exhorts to Unity and Peace, and a due Subjection to him, as an Apostle of Christ ; although his *Preaching* had not been with their admired Eloquence, and *the Wisdom of this World*, but far above it, in *Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power*, and a Discovery of the truest *Wisdom* ; viz. that of God, and such as the Spirit of God had revealed, and confirmed by Miracles. For his Part, he had laid the only sure Foundation, that is, Faith in Jesus Christ, the true Messiah ; and if any Man builded on that Foundation, *Gold, Silver, Precious Stones*, Chap. iii. viz. sound Doctrine, which would abide the Trial, as Gold and Silver abides the Fire, he should receive a Reward ; but whosoever builded *Wood, Hay, or Stubble*, those Doctrines which would not abide the Trial, but proved like Wood and Stubble, which the Fire consumes, viz. such as consisted of curious Questions and Disputings (*f*), *Judaical Observances and Traditions* (*g*) taught by the *Scribes* (*b*), or such like, this Labour should be lost, as Stubble in the Fire ; yet such a Teacher, if he did it through Ignorance of the Simplicity of the Gospel, and meant well and sincerely, might be saved, though with Difficulty, as a Brand plucked

(*e*) Πᾶς σοφίας, Chap. i. 20.

(*f*) Chap. i. 20.

(*g*) Lightfoot Hor. in Chap. iii. 13.

(*b*) Chap. i. 20.

plucked out of the *Fire*: For the Apostle assured them, *the Day* would come (whether that of Christ's coming to take Vengeance on the *Jews* in the Destruction of their City, Temple, and Nation, or the last Day of Judgment) when all Doctrines and Works should be tried, as Metals or Stubble are by the Fire: Upon which he exhorts them all, both *Jews* and *Greeks*, who were *Called* or *Converted*, that they would not set up their own vain Philosophy, or *Wisdom of this World*, or any legal Rites, or *Jewish* Traditions, above the plain Truths of the Gospel, and that only solid *Wisdom of God* preached by him: which some indeed called *Foolishness*, but it should *confound the Wise* among them. To this Purpose he writes the *four First Chapters*, concluding this Part of his Discourse with assuring them of his Faithfulness in preaching the Gospel unto them, however discouraged by their Behaviour; not without a Mixture of Threatning, to use the Power of Discipline Christ had intrusted him with, for the manifesting his own Commission, and reforming the Pride, and Faction, and other Irregularities of some among them.

In the next Place (i), he writes concerning an incestuous Person, whom he subjected to the Discipline of the Church, commanding him to be *delivered unto Satan*, in order to his Repentance; for, by such delivering up, the Devil had Power to inflict Bodily Punishment by some Disease, &c. on the Offender, which the Apostle calls a *Rod*, Chap. iv. 21. He also reproves them for vexatious Law-Suits, and appealing to Heathen Tribunals, to the Scandal of Christianity, and Reflection upon its Professors; telling them, *the*  
*Saints*

(i) Chap. v, vi.

*Saints shall judge the World and Angels*, therefore small Controversies should be left to their Decisions among themselves; whether the Apostle meant, by the Saints judging the World and Angels, the Establishment of a Christian Magistracy, and a Power over Spirits; or that they should be Assessors with Christ at the Day of Judgment, is not evident. The Apostle proceeds to caution them, as against other Vices, so particularly against *Fornication*, which, of all others, *Gentiles* were (k) most noted for.

Afterwards (l), the Apostle answers some Questions they had proposed to him. 1st, Concerning Virginity and Marriage: Those, who having the Gift of Continency, abstain from Marriage (m), are thereby freed from Worldly Incumbrances, or live *without Carefulness*, and are more at Leisure to *care for the Things that belong to the Lord*, especially *in the present Distress*, or Streights of the Church. However, Marriage being appointed a Remedy against Fornication, those who *cannot contain* should marry; and the Husband, or Wife Converted, should not forsake either, though Unconverted, because the Conversion of one of them renders their *Children holy* (n), sanctifies their Offsprings, that is, intitles them to the Gospel Covenant; but *if the Unbelieving depart, let him depart*; a Christian Husband, or Wife, is not under Bondage in such Case. [But it may be objected, Christ forbids Divorce, except in Case of Fornication (o), it is answered, St. Paul is speaking of a voluntary Departing of the Unbeliever, and that most likely

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(k) Hinc *κοινωνία* Scottari, Grotius Pref. in 1 Cor.

(l) Chap. vii, viii. (m) Ver. 1, &c.

(n) See the Twelfth Practical Observation on this Epistle.

(o) Matt. v. 32.



on the Account of the Faith, and when it is probable the Marriage is dissolved by the Adultery of the Unbelieving Husband, or Wife.] In the next Place, the Apostle declares, that their being *Called*, or Converted to Christianity, does not make any Alteration in Mens Civil Affairs, whether one be a Freeman, or a Slave, or Servant (*p*).

And as to the Case of those of either Sex, who, according to the common Notion of the *Jews* and others, esteemed it indecent (*q*) to *pass the Flower of their Age* unmarried (*r*). *If Need so require*, as that they cannot easily contain, it is best that they marry; otherwise, if one finds himself to have a *stedfast* Purpose, and there is *no Necessity*, that is, perceives that he can refrain, he, or she may better continue as they are. This seems to be the Sense (not in respect to Parents disposing of their Daughters) if by *Virgin* (*s*), we understand a Person's own Virginity, and translate (*t*), not *giveth her in Marriage*, but *marries*, as may be according to some of the best Copies in the *Greek* (*u*). And this seems the rather to be the Sense, because that this *Decreeing*, or Resolution, depends upon the *Stedfastness*, or Purpose of one's own *Heart*, and the *Power* a Person *bath over his own Will*; which shews it to belong rather to the Person who marries than to the Parent.

After this, the Apostle answers another Question (*x*), concerning the Partaking of the Feasts in the Idol Temples, which he would have them abstain from. In the ancient Sacrifices, one Part was offered on the Altar, the other eaten by the Offerers :

(*p*) Chap. vii. 20, &c.

(*q*) Eccius xlii. 9. Grotius, and Dr. Whitby in 1 Cor. vii. 36.

(*r*) Chap. vii. 36. (*s*) Ver. 36. (*t*) Ver. 38.

(*u*) γαμίζω, not ἐνγαμίζω. Dr. Mill. in loc. (*x*) Chap. viii.

Offerers : This was esteemed a federal Rite (y), or a Sign of Friendship and Communion with that God to whom the Sacrifice was offered ; so that such a religious Feast was a Communion, or Fellowship with the Idol, or false God. Sometimes a Part of the Flesh offered to the Idol was afterwards sold in the public Market-Place : Now, as the Apostle argues, the Meat is in itself indifferent, an Idol being *nothing*, as for any Deity, only a Fiction, no real God, and so could not pollute the Meat. The Apostles indeed decreed (z), that the *Gentile* Converts should abstain from such Meats, especially those who had been Profelytes of the Gate, possibly by Virtue of one of the Precepts given to the Sons of *Noah*, as hath been observed before in the *Acts*. Hereby also they would not break the Christian Union, by giving Offence to the *Jewish* Christians, who made Conscience of eating any such ; yet the Eating or not Eating is not otherwise necessary in itself, or in the Sight of God of any Moment ; however, since many of the newly converted did think otherwise ; viz. that eating of such Meat was an Honour and Worship to the Idol, a knowing Christian (though he might be satisfied himself the Meat was harmless, yet) by going and eating with such became an *Offence*, or *Stumbling-Block*, or an *Occasion of falling*, by betraying them into Sin, who (out of an erroneous Conscience) believing such Meat to be unclean, were hardened by such an Example, in partaking with the Sacrifice offered to Idols against their Consciences ; and therefore a good Christian is to take care, how he use his Liberty in Things indiffe-

(y) Mede's Christian Sacrifice, *Book* . . *Chap.* 7. *Bishop Potter's Church Government*, *Chap.* v. p. 260.

(z) *Acts* xv.

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indifferent, where there may be Danger of being the Occasion of Sin to another ; as the Apostle himself would rather wholly abstain from such a Dish (as the *Flesh*, or *Meat* which had been offered to Idols) how indifferent soever it was in itself, than wound the weak Conscience of any Christian Brother.

Farthermore, as the Apostle exhorted them to a Care of using their Liberty in Things indifferent ; so he tells them, how himself was careful in that Matter (*a*), because, although the Gospel allows of a Maintenance for the Ministers thereof (which he fully proves) yet he himself quitted that Privilege whilst he was amongst them, as he did in divers other Respects condescend both to the *Jews* and *Gentiles* (*b*), complying with them, in order to the promoting the Gospel. Here, upon the Occasion of mentioning his own Zeal, he stirs them up to imitate him in running the Christian Race, taking a Comparison from the *Isthmian* Games of Running and Wrestling, much used at *Corinth*.

And to make them the more diligent, and that they might not depend too groundlessly on their Christian Privileges, but avoid the Dangers by which others miscarried, and especially by Idolatry, which they might still be ensnared in, by going to the Idol Feasts of their *Gentile* Neighbours, he lays before them (*c*), the Case of the *Israelites*, and shews their Privileges and Advantages, in being all baptized into the Covenant of God, in the Cloud, and *Red Sea*, and made Partakers of the *Manna*, and Waters of the Rock, which he calls *Spiritual*, because they were Types of Christ ; and yet many of them, as they themselves might do,

(*a*) *Chap. ix.*

(*b*) *Ver. 19, &c.*

(*c*) *Chap. x.*



do, miscarried, by reason of divers Impieties, which therefore he exhorts them to *flee from*, particularly Idolatry, Fornication, Murmuring, &c. and if they were not wanting to themselves, God would protect them, and not suffer them to be tempted beyond their Ability. Upon this Occasion, he instructs them again (as he had done before) (*d*), in their Behaviour concerning Things offered to Idols) (*e*), and shews, that although Idol Gods were nothing (as to what the *Gentiles* believed of them) yet since under the Names usually given them (as *Jupiter, Apollo, Mercury*, and such like) the (*f*) Devil deluded Mankind, and acted in and by the Images (*g*), therefore, as they who offered the Sacrifice did sacrifice to Devils, so the going to their Idol Temples, and knowingly eating of Meats offered to Idols, as such, was a Communion with the Devil, as it were feasting with him upon what had been offered to him, as hath been said, and utterly inconsistent with our *Communion with Christ* in the holy Sacrament : And although the Meats offered to Idols were indifferent in themselves, and therefore *lawful* when not eaten as such, in honour of, and by way of partaking with the Idol ; yet they should be careful to give none Offence by eating them (when they were told, or knew them to be such) neither to the unbelieving *Jews*, (who would thence conclude them Enemies to the Law and the Prophets, and imagine that Christians were allowed to honour and worship Idols) nor to the idolatrous *Gentiles* (who might thence suspect their Abhorrence of Idols was real) nor to the weaker

(*d*) Chap. viii. (*e*) Ver. 15, &c.

(*f*) Minutius Felix, Edit. Leiden. 1672. p. 247, 248. & Not. ibid. & Grotius in 1 Cor. x. 20.

(*g*) Deut. xxxii. 17.

weaker Members of *the Church of Christ*, lest they might be tempted by their Example to eat those Things, which themselves judged unclean against their Consciences: *The Earth is the Lord's*, and therefore it both follows, that he can provide Sustenance some other Way, and also that whatever we *eat* or *drink*, or *do*, it should be all to his *Glory*.

Afterwards (*b*), the Apostle treats of the Decency and Order of their publick Assemblies, that whereas the *Man is the Head of the Woman*, as Christ is of the *Man*, they should not confound the Sex; but that the Man should be *uncovered*, in token of Superiority, and the Woman *covered*, or veiled, in token of Subjection; which decent Behaviour ought to be shewn, *because of the Angels*, who are esteemed to be present in the Assemblies of the Saints (*i*): And for the same Reason of Decency, and a preserving of the Distinction of Sexes according to Nature, the Man should not wear his *Hair long*, after the manner of Women, or which becomes a Woman, whose Hair growing long, *is given her for a natural Veil*, or *Covering* (*k*).

The Apostle also directs a suitable Behaviour in Feasts of Charity, and *the Lord's Supper*, which they celebrated *unworthily*, by reason of the *Divisions* and *Factions* among them, and the Disorders  
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(*b*) Chap. xi.

(*i*) *Ham.* in loc.

(*k*) Here it is not so much to be enquired, what may be natural or customary in some Countries; as for Men either to have, or wear long Hair; but the Apostle's Argument seems to be taken from the Particular Notion of the *Corinthians*, Ver. 14, 15. That for a Man to wear his long Hair, it is a Shame unto him; but that for a Woman to have long Hair, it is a Glory to her.

in not staying for one another, and also Intemperance, *not discerning the Lord's Body*, not distinguishing this Supper from other Meals, nor behaving themselves suitably to the End of its Institution, by a solemn Commemoration of Christ's Death. This is the Substance of what is said to the End of the eleventh Chapter.

In the next Place (*l*), the Apostle discourseth concerning *spiritual* Persons, and their *spiritual Gifts*, such as peculiar Wisdom and Knowledge in Matters of Religion; the Gifts of Healing, and of Languages, and Propheying, &c. Of these he declares that every one had his Proportion, according to the Will of God, and they should not look at each other as single by himself, but one assist the other, and all join for the public Good of the Church, as *Members of the same Body*, each supporting and helping another; otherwise, without this Unity, and also Love and Charity, which St. Paul hence takes an Occasion to describe (*m*), the best Gifts are not valuable. The Apostle adds a solemn Charge against using the Gift of Tongues without interpreting (*n*), and that *women keep silence in the Churches*, so as not to perform any Ministerial Office in the Christian Assemblies, as a Sign of their being under Obedience or Subjection to their Husbands (*o*). Thus much from the Beginning of the twelfth, to the End of the fourteenth Chapter.

And because some among them had learned from their Philosophers (*p*), to deny *the Resurrection of the Dead* (*q*), therefore the Apostle fully asserts and proves that Doctrine (*r*), shewing,

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that

(*l*) Chap. xii. (*m*) Particularly, Chap. xiii. (*n*) Chap. xiv.

(*o*) Ver. 34, &c. (*p*) Grotius's Preface in 1 Cor.

(*q*) Chap. xv. 12. (*r*) Chap. xv.



that we shall rise by Virtue of, Christ's Resurrection, which is a Pledge of the General Resurrection of all Mankind (*r*), and whereby Christ having subdued all the Enemies of his Church, *the last* of which is *Death*, he himself shall *deliver up*, and resign his *Kingdom*, or kingly Power and Office, as Mediator, to the Father; there being then no farther Occasion for such a Power or Office: And then God (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost) shall be *all in all*, govern all things immediately without a Mediator for the future (*s*). Farther, if there be no Resurrection, *what shall they do who are baptized for the dead* (*t*)? Of which difficult Text there are, among others, the following Interpretations, *viz.* 1<sup>st</sup>. That to be *baptized for the dead* signifies to be baptized in the Person, or Stead, of one that died before he was baptized (but this being the Practice (*u*) of some Hereticks, it is not likely that the Apostle would raise an Argument from thence). Or, 2<sup>dly</sup>, Upon confessing (*x*) the Article of the Resurrection of *the Dead*, and consequently in hope of the Resurrection: Which Interpretation seems most probable. And so the Question is put, Why have they, in their Baptism, made Profession of the Resurrection from the Dead (*y*)? The Apostle says, indeed, that *flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God* (*z*); but that is meant of Flesh and Blood, as it is now unaltered, and subject to Corruption; and therefore he adds in the following Words, *Neither doth corruption inherit incorruption*: But the gross Bodies of the Saints shall be altered, as to their Quality,

at

(*r*) Ver. 13, &c.      (*s*) Ver. 24, &c.      (*t*) Ver. 29.  
 (*u*) Chrysostom in loc.  
 (*x*) Chrysostom. & Hammond in loc.  
 (*y*) See Ver. 14, 17.      (*z*) Ver. 50.

at the Resurrection, and changed into *spiritual Bodies* (a). Whereby it is understood, that they shall be free from their gross Allay, and be refined and made pure and bright like Spirits, be *raised in Glory*, fitted for the Enjoyment of spiritual and heavenly Pleasures; and also have no need of Sleep or Nourishment, like unto a *natural Body*, nor be subject any more to Sicknes, Death, or Corruption; for *this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality* (b). And as for such who shall be living when the Day of Judgment comes, or found alive *at the last trump*, they *shall not sleep*, or die; that is, after the usual Dissolution of Nature (c), *but shall be changed in a moment*, or put into the same State with such, who were dead, and are risen again.

Afterwards (d), he puts them in mind of providing beforehand a Relief to be sent to their Christian Brethren at *Jerusalem*; and to that Purpose, that every one should *lay by him in store*, each Lord's Day, in such a measure as God had blessed him the Week before.

*Lastly*, Having exhorted them to Stedfastness and Christian Love, with Submission to their spiritual Teachers, as the best way to cure their Dissensions and Disorders, he concludes.

In (e) this last Chapter, the Apostle pronounces a direful Judgment against one who *loves not the Lord Jesus*: *Let him be Anathema Maranatha*: The former of these two Words signifies *accursed*, or devoted to Destruction; the latter, *the Lord cometh*; that is, let him be accursed, the Lord cometh to execute Vengeance on him (f).

R 2

*Observa-*

(a) *Ver. 44.* (b) *Ver. 53.* (c) *Ver. 51.* (d) *Chap. xvi.*

(e) *The 22d Verse.*

(f) *Hammond in loc.*

*Observations on the First Epistle to the Corinthians.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**HAT the *Fire* St. Paul mentions (g) cannot be a Popish Purgatory-Fire, because it is not proper material Fire, but figuratively so called (h); he shall be saved *so, as* by Fire. Again; This Fire was to try not every *Man*, but every *Man's Works* (i) (for which see what hath been said before on the first Part of this Epistle). Farther, the Scripture intimates no more than two States after this Life, in Heaven or Hell; and two Expectances, of Salvation or Damnation; and divides all sorts of People into two Ranks, Sheep and Goats: A third Place or Mansion is nowhere to be found in Scripture.

2<sup>dly</sup>, That it is of much Concern, that every Member of Christ's Church do his Duty, in preserving Peace and Unity amongst Christians, since the Apostle writes thus earnestly to the *Corinthians*, as well as to the *Romans*, on this Subject (k), and represents those who cause Divisions as mere *carnal* Persons, and their Behaviour as contrary to the Christian Doctrine, as it would be unnatural to tear off a Limb or Member from the rest of one and the same Body.

3<sup>dly</sup>, That although the Apostle wrought with his Hands at *Corinth*, yet he declared it to be the *Ordinance of the Lord*, that the Ministers should be maintained by those to whom they minister spiritual things (either by publick Prayer, and Praises, preaching, or administering the Sacraments) (l). The Prophet *Micah* (m) complained,  
the

(g) Chap. iii. (h) As appears from Ver. 15. (i) Ver. 13.

(k) Chap. i. 10, 11, 12, 13. and iii. 3, 4, &c. and xii. 12, 13, 25. (l) Chap. ix. 7. to 15. See 2 *Thess.* iii. 8, 9.

(m) Chap. iii. 11.



*the Priests teach for hire* ; but that was not because they had a Maintenance, for God allotted the same, and a very large one too : For first they had the *tenth* Part, which from the Beginning God reserved to himself (*n*), and then settled it on the *Levites* (*o*) ; then another Tythe, of the nine Parts remaining, was to be spent at the Tabernacle, of which the *Levites* had their Share (*p*) ; to which if we add the First-born, with other Offerings, the Cities and Suburbs appropriated to the *Levites*, it hath been computed, that a fifth Part of the Land belonged to them ; and the Prophet reproved the People for with-holding any Part of these *Tythes and Offerings*, because thereby they *robbed*, not so much Man, as God himself (*q*). But the Priests were reprov'd, because for *Hire* they dared to teach, not what God appointed them, but what best pleased the People, and for Money soothed them in their Sins (*r*). So the *Hireling* in *Jobn* (*s*) is not he who receives Maintenance or *Hire*, of which Christ says *the Labourer is worthy* (*t*), but he who intrudes, *whose own the Sheep are not* (*u*), and designs not their good, *careth not for the sheep*, but in Danger fleeth, and leaveth them to themselves (*x*).

4thly, That the Apostle's declaring against the Philosophy, or *Wisdom of this World*, and the *Excellency of Speech*, or Eloquence, in the Beginning of this Epistle, doth not thereby disparage sound Philosophy, human Learning and Wisdom, or the Gift of persuasive speaking, but such vain Philosophy, Wisdom and Eloquence of the *Corinthians*,

R 3

as

(*n*) *Lev.* xxvii. 30. (*o*) *Numb.* xviii. 20, 21.

(*p*) *Deut.* xii. 17, 18. (*q*) *Mal.* iii. 8.

(*r*) See *Mic.* ii. 11. and iii. 5. (*s*) *x.* 12. (*t*) *Luke* x. 7.

(*u*) *Ver.* 12. (*x*) *Ver.* 13.

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as rendered them proud and conceited, and made them esteem the *preaching of Christ foolishness* (y), and oppose *the Wisdom of God*, and the *Mysteries* of the Gospel; as if it were beneath their deep Knowledge and lofty Eloquence, to vouchsafe Attention to the Apostle, when he preached Christ crucified, *in weakness and fear, and much trembling* (z). But when, on the other hand, human Learning, true Philosophy and Knowledge, and a Fluency of Speech, are made to be subservient to the Glory of God, the Author of every good and perfect Gift, and the Demonstration of the Gospel, by promoting the great End and Design thereof, to the Honour of God, and the Good of Souls; such Wisdom and Learning *St. Paul* is so far from disparaging, that he thanked God (a), that they were *enriched in all utterance, and in all knowledge*; and he himself, as other inspired Writers of the Scriptures, very often illustrates divine Subjects by the Ornaments of Eloquence and Figures of Speech, to make the greater Impression on our Minds. It is true, indeed, that we ought to attend more to the Truth of them than the ornamental Expression; yet we here learn, that this last is often very useful to make the former the more agreeable and accepted: And farther, as for the Study of Philosophy, and a Skill in Nature, it is apt to beget in Men the higher Veneration for the God of Nature. Some, indeed, who had but a slight superficial Knowledge, and looked only upon second Causes, withal having proud Minds and vicious Inclinations, have become obnoxious to atheistical Thoughts; and have fancied they could

(y) *Chap. i. 18, 24.*      (z) *Chap. ii. 2, 3.*  
 (a) *Chap. i. 4, 5.*

could give an Account of things, without having recourse to a Creation or Providence: But the more deeply Men penetrate into the Nature of things, they will be the more apt to acknowledge their own Ignorance, and the divine Wisdom, Power and Goodness; and consequently become the more disposed to a Regularity in their Minds and Conversations, and be the more virtuous and religious. The same may be said of the *Philosophy and vain Deceit* this Apostle cautions the *Colossians* to beware of (b).

5thly, That the worshipping of Images or Idols is a very heathenish Custom and Sin: So the Apostle minds the *Corinthians* at *Corinth*, that before their Conversion they were *carried away to dumb idols* (c). The Papists pretend, that as their Images are the Images of Christ and some Saints, not the Idols of the *Gentiles*; so in their Intentions, the Worship which, for Instance, is paid to the Image of Christ, is referred to Christ himself, whom the Image represents: But then, in the 1st Place, whatever Worship they give to Christ, they give it first to the Image. 2dly, This was the Pretence of the Pagan Idolaters, who did not make the Image the last Object, but fancied that their Gods resided in the consecrated Images (d). 3dly, They ought not religiously to worship any Image at all; for God hath made all religious Worship peculiar to himself, and therefore he only is the Object of religious Worship (e). *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

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(b) Col. ii. 8. See more of this in the Third Observation on the *Colossians*. (c) Chap. xii. 2.

(d) See the third Homily of the Church against the Peril of Idolatry.

(e) Matt. iv 10.



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*serve.* The representing God by an Image, is a debasing him, who is a jealous God, as if he was a corporeal Being, or a Creature like ourselves. When therefore God hath determined the Way of his Worship not to be by an Image, his Law is to be the Rule of Worship, and not our Invention; especially when the outward Act is expressly contrary to his Law.

6thly, That it is contrary to the Apostle's Direction for the publick Worship and Service, to use a Language which is not understood by the People, since they cannot say *Amen* to what they do not understand (*f*). This Usage is also contrary to the Custom of the antient Christian Churches, who worshipped God in their own (*g*) Languages, as appears by the Liturgies we have in Languages then generally spoken; which were *Greek* in the *Eastern* Churches, and *Latin* in the *Western*. Among the rest, they of the Church of *Rome* had their publick Service in the *Latin* Tongue, because it was then their own Language, and well understood by the People: But by the coming of barbarous Nations among them, they lost their Language by degrees, and yet most ridiculously kept up the Scripture and the publick Service in the *Latin* Tongue, when it was not understood, except by the Learned only. Which unreasonable Practice is contrary to a Decree of one of their Popes and Council twelve hundred Years after Christ (*h*); and, which is more, to that *Edification* which the Holy Ghost enjoins (*i*); and therefore the Apostle gives this Reason against it (*k*),

(*f*) Chap. xiv. 14, 15, 16, 17.

(*i*) See *Bishop Jewel's Defence*, Part. V. Chap. III. Divis. 9. and *Reply*, Artic. III.

(*h*) Concil. Lateran, Chap. 9.

(*j*) *Ver.* 36.

it (k), *the other is not edified*. It is therefore in vain to pretend, as the Papists do, that it is sufficient to be present at the Sacrament, or to hear Mass, if one knows what is done, and in his Heart contemplates the divine Mysteries, and thereby raises his Affections of Love, Hope, Sorrow for Sins, &c. whereby he may be a Partaker of the Prayers of the Priest, and of the Sacrifice which he is then offering, although he understood not the Words spoken (as it was among the *Jews*, while the Priest was offering in the Temple, *the people were praying without* (l), and could not hear what the Priest said): As if St. Paul's Discourse about Edification, and the Church Service in a known Tongue, and the constant Practice of the Primitive Church, had signified nothing; and as if it had been no Part of the publick Devotion, to join in the publick Prayers; or lastly, that a Man may as easily raise his Affections by Words which he cannot understand, as by those he doth. As for the *Jews*, what the Priest did in the Temple at the offering Incense, was peculiar to him as a Priest, in which the People were not to bear a Part with him; and it does not appear, that he then used any Prayers at all; but there are Prayers in the Mass which the People are concerned in; and whatever devout Thoughts they may have otherwise, they cannot join with the Priest in offering up the same Petitions to God.

7thly, The Apostle has explained the Words of Christ, concerning the Bread in the Sacrament, *This is my Body*; namely, that we are not to understand it, as if the Substance of the Bread was by *Transubstantiation* changed into the real gross substantial Body of Christ, as the *Papists* pretend;  
for

(k) Ver. 17.

(l) Luke i. 10.

for He calls it *Bread* after Consecration (a). *The Bread which we break*; and *We are all Partakers of that one Bread*. Again (b): *As often as we eat this Bread*, which we cannot do till after Consecration. But that such Bread, duly blessed, broken, and received, is the *Communion* (or *Communication*) of the *Body of Christ* (c); a making the Faithful Joint-Partakers of the Benefits of Christ's Body being crucified on the Cross, and his Blood shed for our Redemption. So that the Bread is Christ's Body only in a mystical and spiritual Sense; that is, the Sacrament of his Body, as representing his crucified Body, and conveying the Benefits thereof to our Souls. When Christ spake these Words to his Disciples, *Take eat, this is my Body*, they saw him alive before them, and therefore could not conceive that he meant his natural Body to be both whole and living before their Eyes, and yet broken and crucified, or given for them at the same Time; but they must know it was a sacramental Phrase, like that of the Passover Lamb, which was a Type of Christ (d): *Ye shall eat it in haste*; it is (that is, represents) *the Lord's Passover*.

8thly, That to worship the Host, or consecrated Wafer in the Sacrament, is to worship a Creature, which is to commit Idolatry; for although it is, by Consecration, sanctified to a spiritual and more exalted Use than it was before, yet the Substance of it still remains: Accordingly the ancient Christians, as they expressed a great Reverence for this Sacrament, and apprehended it an unsearchable Mystery, and on all Occasions endeavoured  
to

\* (a) Chap. x. 16, 17.

(b) Chap. xi. 26.

(c) Chap. x. 16, 17.

(d) Exod. xii. 1.



to inflame their own and their Brethrens Hearts with the most ardent Love of God for it, and the devouteft Receiving thereof; and often fay, the Eucharift is *the Flefh and Body of Chrift, which fuffered for our fins* (e); yet (which is the main Point) they plainly diftinguifh between the *material, bodily, and earthly Part* thereof, and the *fpiritual, or heavenly Part*: The former, fay they, we receive with our *Mouths*, and that nourifhes our *Bodies*; the latter we receive by *Faith*, and that feeds our *Souls* (f).

9thly, The Apoftle absolutely forbids a Woman to teach in the Congregation, that ſhe may not thereby *ufurp Authority over the man*; but commands, that the *women keep ſilence in the churches*; *for it is not permitted for them to ſpeak*; and if *they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a ſhame for a woman to ſpeak in the church* (g). What the Apoftle ſays of a Woman's *praying or propheſying* (h), cannot mean the Performance of any minifterial Office of Praying or Teaching in the Congregation, or during the Time of publick Divine Service, for that would contradict what he ſays in the ſame Epiftle, as abovementioned; but ſome extraordinary ſudden Motion or Impulſe of the Holy Spirit (as was uſual in the firſt Times of the Goſpel) and even upon that Account, they were not permitted to ſpeak *in the Churches*, or during the Time of publick Divine Service, though at any other Time

(e) Ignatij Epift. ad Smyrn. §. 7.

(f) Forbeſij Inſtruct. Hiſt. Theolog. l. 11. c. 11, 15, 17.  
Archbiſhop Tillotſon's Diſcourſe againſt Tranſubſtantiation.  
Jewel's Defence of his Apol. Part II. Chap. xii. Diviſ. 1.  
Irenæus, l. 4. c. 34. ſerè ad finem, & Grabe Not. ibid.

(g) Chap xiv. 34, 35. See alſo 1 Tim, ii. 12.

(h) Chap. xi. 5.

Time or Place they might, with their head veiled. Whether *prophefying* there, fignifies to foretel something to come, or to expound Scripture Myfteries, or rather to praife God by inspired Hymns (*i*), it is evident thofe Gifts were extraordinary ; and the Quakers cannot pretend to either of them, any more than to the Primitive Miracles of Healing the Sick, or Raifing the Dead.

10thly, As nothing is to be enjoined or obferved in God's Worfhip, but what is in general agreeable to his holy Word ; fo, as to the particular Circumftances of publick Worfhip ; viz. the Place, Time, Method, or Manner, &c. thefe are left to the Prudence of the Governors of the Church, provided, all that is ordained of thefe Particulars be agreeable to the general Rules of St. *Paul*, here laid down (*k*): *Let all things be done to edifying*, and (*l*) *Let all things be done decently, and in order*. Hence it follows, that the Miftake of fome, concerning the Ceremonies of the Church, arifes from their not diftinguifhing between the *Subftance* of Worfhip, and the *Circumftances* thereof ; for although nothing can be an Article of Faith unlefs God has revealed it, and confequently it is only God who can direct in the Subftance of religious Worfhip ; as Adoration, Prayer, Praife, the Sacraments, &c. yet as to the Time, Manner, Order, or Method, the Garb of him who officiates, and the like ; thefe are only Circumftances, indifferent and mutable in themfelves, and left to the Difcretion of the Church, according to the afore-mentioned Rule for Edification, Decency, and Order, which St. *Paul* here appoints ; and the en-  
joining

(*i*) Mede, *Diff.* 16.

(*k*) Chap. xiv. 26.

(*l*) *Ver.* 40.

joining these indifferent Things, in Compliance with the Apostle's Rule, is not *teaching for Doctrines the Commandments of Men*, because they are not enjoined as necessary or good in themselves, as the Pharisees esteemed their Traditions to be; but only as the Holy Ghost directs, as tending to Edifying, Decency, and Order (*l*). The Scripture nowhere says, that nothing is to be used in the Worship of God, but what is prescribed therein; and when the Substance of Christ's Institutions remains intire, the appointing Circumstances is not an *Addition* in the Scripture Sense, provided those Circumstantialia are not disagreeable to the Nature of Christ's Institutions, and do not render any religious Office the less acceptable to God.

11thly, The *Matter* of Prayer, and the Ability of *expressing it*, either in known or unknown Languages, in the Apostles and first Christians, was extraordinary, as the other spiritual Gifts of interpreting ancient Prophecies, healing Diseases, &c. and were afforded for two Reasons; *viz.* To supply the *present Necessity* of the Church, and also to be for a *Sign* and Confirmation of the Gospel: This is evident from the Place (*m*) where we find that some abused their *spiritual Gifts* of Tongues, by their Prayers and Hymns in the publick Assemblies, where none, or few were present who understood them; this being so contrary to that Decency, Order, and Edification, which the Apostle directs them in, as a Rule for the regulating of their Behaviour, and the Exercise of their Gifts in publick (*n*). He forbids any one's praying or singing in an unknown Tongue, unless the *Meaning* were known to the rest, or himself, or any one present

(*l*) See the *Third Remark* on the *Gospels*.

(*m*) *Chap. xiv.*

(*n*) *Ver. 26, 40.*



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present *interpret* the Meaning (o). Then adds (p); *What is it then? I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the Understanding also; I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the Understanding also* (that is, so as to be understood, or to teach others (q)). So that no one ought any more to pretend to the Gift of praying with or by the Spirit, in the Sense the Apostle here speaks, than of Tongues, or Languages, which he never learnt. The like seems to be the true Sense of these Words (r): *The Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered*: In which Place, the Apostle is speaking of those who had *the first fruits of the spirit* (s); that is, were endowed with the extraordinary Gifts (t) thereof (u): So that, as far as we can know, since Miracles are ceased, the Gift of Prayer, which we can expect now, is probably that *Compunction of the Heart* in praying, whereby we may perform the Duty rightly, by the Assistance of the Holy Spirit; and therefore, when we perceive our Minds to be possessed with deep Impressions of the glorious Majesty of God, his Holiness, and Purity, infinite Power, Justice, Love, and Goodness to all his Creatures, especially to Mankind; together with an humble Sense of our own Vileness and Pollutions, and of our Necessities, and absolute Dependance upon him; if from hence, our Affections are excited, and our Hearts lifted up to God, through Faith in Christ, with Fervour, an affectionate

(o) Ver. 8, to 15. (p) Ver. 15. (q) Ver. 19.

(r) Rom. viii. 26. (s) Ver. 23.

(t) See Chrysostom in loc. & Hammond in Jude, Ver. 20.

(u) Compare Eph. vi. 18. and Jude Ver. 20.

tionate Reliance on his Goodness, and entire Resignation to his Will; this is *spiritual Praying*, whether we have gotten some Form of a Prayer by Heart, or read the same in a Book, or hear it read by others.

12thly, The Apostle affords an evident Argument for *Infant-Baptism* (x): *The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean, but now are they holy*: That is, having by Birth a Title or Claim to be admitted into the Christian Covenant (y), which the Children of Unbelievers have not; as appears, because the Scriptures often understand by the *Unclean*, the *Heathens*, in Opposition to the *Jews*, who were the clean or *holy* People; that is, in Covenant with God. So (z), *An highway shall be there, it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it (a); but the redeemed shall walk there (b)*. Hence the *Jews* are stiled *an Holy Seed* (c). In the same Sense the *Jews*, in the Times of the New Testament, were wont to understand (d) the Term *Holy*; for when a Man and his Wife, who had been *Heathens*, were made Profelytes to *Judaism*, they were to be separated ninety Days, that it might be known whether their Children were begotten *without Holiness*, as they expressed it, or *within*; that is, whilst the Parents were *Gentiles* or *Jewish* Profelytes, and so within the Covenant; to which  
known

(x) Chap. vii. 14.

(y) *Which St. Jerom expresses by Candidatidei*; apud Grotius in loc. (z) *Isaiab xxxv. 8, 9.*

(a) Lightfoot Hor. in 1 Cor. vii. 14.

(b) See also *Isaiab liii. 1. Acts x. 28.*

(c) *Exra ix. 2. Isaiab vi. 13.*

(d) Lightfoot Hor. in 1 Cor. vii. 14.

known and common Sense of the Word *Holy*, the Apostle here alludes. And thus St. *Peter* (e), where he observes, that the holy People, who had been in Covenant with God, namely, the *Jews*, being cast off, the Professors of Christianity were separated to be the People of God, and so became holy; *Ye are a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People; which in time past were not a people, but are now the People of God.* And in this Sense St. *Paul* shews in the forecited Passage (f), that the *Children* of either Christian Parent are *holy*, or have a Title to be admitted to the Covenant of Grace; and then they are as capable of being so admitted, and of receiving the Sign thereof, viz. Baptism, as the holy Seed of the *Jews* were of Circumcision.

It is objected, that by *Unclean* is meant *Bastards*, and being *Holy*, signifies *Legitimate*: But that cannot be, 1<sup>st</sup>, Because if both Parents were *Heathens*, the Children would not be therefore Bastards. And, 2<sup>dly</sup>, The Apostle is not there speaking of any political Affair, as of Bastardy or Legitimacy; but for the Satisfaction of the Conscience of such a Christian Man or Woman, whose Wife or Husband was a *Gentile* or Unbeliever; that the Christian in such Case should not dissolve the Marriage, because it was so far sanctified by one of them being a Christian, that their Children were as *Holy*, having as much a Title to the Covenant of Grace, as if both Parents had been Christians (g).

13<sup>thly</sup>, Though St. *Paul* commends the *Corinthians* for keeping the *Ordinances*, or Traditions, which he delivered them (h), yet this can be no  
Plea

(e) 1 *Pet.* ii. 9, 10.(f) 1 *Cor.* vii. 14.(g) See farther on the *Seventh Observation* on the *Acts*.(h) *Chap.* xi. 2.



Plea for the superstitious Traditions of the *Papists*, till they can prove them to have been delivered by the Mouth of an Apostle, and received as such by the Primitive Church, as were the Ordinances and Traditions which St. *Paul* mentions.

14thly, From the Direction (*b*), *Upon the first day of the Week, let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him*; many pious Christians, both in the ancient Church, and of latter Years, have kept a Stock in a *Box* or *Purse* (*i*) for the Poor, that might be ready, as Opportunity should be offered to distribute it; and have experienced a great Conveniency in this Method of Charity, in being so far from grudging when a due Occasion has been offered, that they have been rather pleased with an Opportunity of disposing well what they have laid up for that Purpose. And farther, hence we learn, that not only the richer Sort are concerned in the Duty of Charity, but all Christians in one Degree or other (though the greater the Ability is, the greater is the Obligation to the Duty, and the more are the Opportunities of performing it). St. *Paul* here appoints that every one lay by in Store, *as God hath prospered him* (*k*); and the Measure of Charity is proportioned *according to that a Man hath*; and (*l*) *the Ability which God giveth*: So that when a poor Man sees another to be in more Want than himself is, at such a Time, either in respect to Sufferings in Body or Goods; in such Case, Christian Compassion, and the giving Assistance, is the poor Man's Duty, and will procure his Reward.

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(*b*) Chap. xvi. 2.

(*i*) ΚΙΣΩΤΙΟΝ ΠΕΝΕΤΩΝ, Chrysostom in loc.

(*k*) 2 Cor. viii. 12.

(*l*) 1 Pet. iv. 11.

*Design of the Second Epistle to the  
Corinthians.*

**S**T. Paul having understood by *Titus* (whom he met at *Macedonia*) (*m*), the good Effects of his *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, in their Sorrow, Submission, and good Disposition towards him; in this he treats them accordingly; although there were still some remaining that opposed him, whom he frequently takes Occasion sharply to reprove; but at the same Time, so as not to discourage the rest. In this Epistle, it hath been observed, and will soon appear to any one who reads and considers it with Attention, that the Apostle, through his Affection and Concern, applies to them with great Art and Insinuation; by turns commending and threatening, frowning and smiling on them. And first of all, he encourages them in Trouble, from the Consideration of his own Deliverance, and gives them an Account of his Delay in coming to them, that it was not out of Inconstancy, but chiefly *to spare* them (*n*): For that having not heard of their Reformation before *Titus's* Return, he was loth to come to correct them, according to the Power given him by the Holy Ghost, which would have occasioned an *Heaviness* (*o*). He also gives Order about the incestuous Person mentioned in the former Epistle, who had been excommunicated, and delivered over unto Satan; that the Censure and Punishment should be taken off.

After

(*m*) Chap. vii. 5, 6.  
(*o*) Chap. ii. 1.

(*n*) Chap. i. 23.

After this (*p*), whereas one principal Cause of the Faction and Disorder among them, complained of in the former Epistle, proceeded from some false Teachers having corrupted the Christian Doctrine, and disgraced the Apostle ; he vindicates the Gospel Ministry in general, as being far above that under the Law of *Moses* ; and assures them in particular of his own Sincerity and Faithfulness, and the Joy he conceived in their spiritual Good, and their godly Sorrow and Reformation.

(*q*) He exhorts them to hasten their Contribution for the Relief of their poor Brethren, the Christians at *Jerusalem*, after the Example of the Church in *Macedonia*. On this Occasion are mentioned many excellent Motives and Encouragements to the Duty of liberal Alms-giving, worthy to be often and seriously read by all Christians.

Then (*r*) he returns again to exhort them not to hearken to his Opposers, those false Apostles, who by debasing his Person and Authority amongst them, were an Hindrance to their Edification. These Slanderers oblige him to give some Account of his own Zeal in promoting the Gospel, and of his Labours and Sufferings for it, and of the Favours he had of being wrapt up into the third Heaven, where he had a Glimpse of the Joys above ; nevertheless, he gloried most in the Cross of Christ, and acknowledged his *Infirmities* and *Afflictions*, the *Thorn in the Flesh*, to be permitted, lest he should be exalted above Measure. What was the particular Infirmary or Affliction here spoken of, is not mentioned : It could

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not

(*p*) Chap. iii. &c. to the End of the viith.

(*q*) In Chapters viii. and ix.

(*r*) Chap. x, &c. to Ver. 14. of the xiith Chapter.



not be the Motions to Lust, because he had in a singular Manner the *Gift* of Continence (*s*) ; nor would he have *gloried* therein, as he did (*t*). It was most probably some extraordinary bodily Pain or Distemper, which was visible and known (*u*), in which Manner God sometimes exercises his best Servants.

Lastly (*x*), he signifies his Readiness to see them again : In the mean time, he exhorts them to lay aside their Disorders and Factions, attended with Debates and Strifes, Backbitings and Tumults ; and also hopes he may not find any but what do sufficiently repent of their Fornications, Unclean-ness, and all other Vices ; lest when he came he should *not spare*. And as for a *Proof* of his Apostleship, which the false Teachers demanded, that appeared even by themselves ; and the Effect which the Gospel had, since Christ was *mighty* in them, by his Grace and the Gifts of the Spirit so manifest among them. He exhorts them therefore to examine themselves, whether they were *in the Truth*, or no ; and to lay aside all their Prejudices against him, that they might be still *ap-proved* of God ; that so he might not be forced to exercise the Apostolical Authority, and inflict the Censure of the Church, or *use Sharpness* : But if it should so happen, the main Design would be, not their Destruction, but Edification : Concluding with a solemn Charge, that they check all their old Divisions, and preserve Unity and Peace among themselves, and then *the God of Love and Peace* would be with them. For all which Pur-  
poses,

(*s*) 1 Cor. vii. 7.

(*t*) Chap. xii. 9.

(*u*) Gal. iv. 13, 14.

(*x*) Chap. xii. 14, &c. to the End of the Epistle.

poses, he gives them that solemn Benediction, *The Grace, or Favour, of our Lord Jesus, the meritorious Cause of our Redemption, and the Love of God the Father, and the Communion, Fellowship, or a Partaking of the Gifts and Sanctification of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.*

*Observations on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**HAT liberal Alms-giving is a proper Christian Duty, which will be accepted and rewarded (a).

2<sup>dly</sup>, That if a Man designs and purposes God's Glory, and the Discharge of his Duty, he needs not to be much disturbed at the disgraceful Reproaches of ill-natured Persons; since *St. Paul*, so holy and zealous for the general Good of the Church, could not escape backbiting and slanderous Tongues (b).

3<sup>dly</sup>, That the Quakers Pretence of *Christ*, or *the Spirit within them*, in some extraordinary manner to enlighten and guide them by immediate Revelation, above all others, is by a Mistake grounded on the Words (c), *Know ye not that Jesus Christ is in you?* For the Apostle does not speak this to any single Person, but the Church of *Corinth* in general; and the Words signify *in*, or *among you*; as when we say such a one is *in* our Company, we mean that he is amongst us. So, whereas the *Corinthians* wanted a *Proof of Christ's speaking in*, or by *St. Paul* (d), he asks them, *Know ye not your selves*, that is, by the Miracles done among you, and various Gifts of the Spirit conferred on,

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and

(a) *Chap. viii. ix.*

(b) *Chap. x. 10.*

(c) *2 Cor. xiii. 5.*

(d) *Ver. 3.*

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and also a spiritual Life and Conversation wrought in divers of you, that through my Preaching Jesus Christ is manifested among you, and may indeed be said to abide in many of you, by his Grace and Gifts of his Holy Spirit, *except ye be Reprobates*, disapprove of God, and so have provoked him, either not to grant, or to withdraw these Gifts from you. But then the gross Mistake of those People is twofold; first, that they confound the two Sorts of spiritual Gifts, the extraordinary ones vouchsafed to the Apostles, and some first Christians, of working Miracles, with those which were to continue in the Church; and vainly support their Pretences to the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, by Promises peculiar to the Apostles and first Christians. And farther, they make the Spirit to contradict himself, in particular by denying the two Sacraments of Christ's Institution, as it is revealed to us by the same Spirit in the Holy Scriptures (e).

*Design of the Epistle to the Galatians, or the Christians at Galatia,*

**G**ALATIA was not a particular City, but a Country or Province in the *Lesser Asia*, where St. Paul had preached the Gospel (a). He had, it seems, heard, that since his Departure several *false Brethren*, or *Judaizers*, had crept in amongst them, and, as in other Places, had taught the Necessity of observing Circumcision, and the other Ordinances of the Law of *Moses*: To which Purpose they vilified the Person of St. Paul, as if he (who was the great Stickler against the legal Ordinances)

(e) See the *Twelfth Practical Observation on the Gospel*.

(a) *Acts* xviii. 23.



dinances) had only received his Doctrine from others, and therefore was not so much to be hearkened to as the other Apostles, who had been conversant with Christ upon Earth, particularly *Peter, James and John* (who preaching chiefly to the *Jews*, might not be so earnest at first against Circumcision, and the other Rites and Ceremonies of the Law of *Moses*, the better to gain upon that People). St. *Paul* declares (*b*), that although he was not converted till after Christ's Ascension, yet he learned not his Doctrine from any of the Apostles, but by immediate Revelation from Heaven (*c*): And that he was an Apostle of Christ, having received a particular Commission from the Lord Jesus for the Conversion of the *Gentiles*; whose Conversation *Peter* withdrawing from at *Antioch*, upon the Coming of some *Jewish* Converts thither, was *to be blamed*; in that he discouraged the *Gentile* Converts, and too much complied with the *Judaizing* Christians.

And because the false Teachers would persuade the *Galatians*, that Circumcision and the other *Mosaic* Rites were necessary, and which they were to be justified by; this the Apostle largely refutes (*d*). And first of all demands, whether they had not received the miraculous *Gifts* of the Spirit when believing in Christ, and not whilst under the Law? and afterwards shews, that *Abraham* was justified by Faith, and that Believers in Christ are the spiritual *Children of Abraham*, in whom *all Nations* were to be blessed, Christ the Messiah being descended from him. Now the Covenant was made with *Abraham* long before the Law was

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given;

(*b*) Chap. i. to the 16th Verse of Chap. ii.

(*c*) See Acts xxvi. 15, 16.

(*d*) Chap. ii. 16, &c. and Chap. iii, iv.

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given; so that there is now no Distinction between Jew and Gentile, but they are equally *Heirs of God through Christ*: And there is no Occasion for the converted *Gentiles*, who are freed from the heathen Rites, to turn again to the like *beggarly Elements*, or Rites of the Law, as to observe the *Jewish Sabbath-Days*, and *New Moons*, and yearly Feasts.

This he illustrates (e) by *Abraham's* two Sons; viz. *Ishmael*, by *Hagar* a Bondmaid (f), and *Isaac*, by *Sarah* a Freewoman (g).

*Ishmael* was born after the *Flesh*, that is, by natural Generation, or Course of Nature, before *Abraham* was too old for Children; but *Isaac* was by Virtue of God's *Promise*, when by reason of Age his Parents were incapable of Children after the usual natural Course. These two, *Ishmael* and *Isaac*, the Apostle says, were an *Allegory* (h) or Similitude, representing the *two Covenants*; the one of the Law delivered from *Mount Sinai*, signified by the Bondwoman *Hagar*, which tendeth to *Bondage*, and answers to the *earthly Jerusalem*, or the *Jewish Church*; the other is the Covenant established by Christ, represented by the Freewoman *Sarah*, and answers to the *heavenly Jerusalem*, or the *Christian Church* (i), and tendeth to *Freedom*. Now we who believe in Christ, are the *Children of the Promise*, and as it were of the Freewoman, as was *Isaac*; and so are free from the Yoke of the Law: We are therefore to stand fast in that Liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free (k),

(e) Chap. iv. 25, &c. (f) Gen. xviii. 16.

(g) Gen. xxi. 1, 2, 3.

(h) See in Part I. the Third General Remark on the Prophets.

(i) As Heb. xii. 25. Him that spake on Earth, i. e. *Moses*, is opposed to him that speaketh from Heaven; i. e. *Christ*,

free (k), for that *Faith* in Christ will save, provided it be after the Gospel Way ; that is, joined with a holy, spiritual Life, or, *which worketh by Love* (l). For although the Gospel be a State of *Liberty* from the Bondage of the ceremonial Law ; yet not *for an occasion to the flesh* (m), to satisfy the Lufts thereof, and to neglect the holy Duties of Christianity.

To which Purpose, in the latter Part of the Epistle (n), he exhorts them to prove their Faith in that respect, as shewing the proper *Fruits of the Spirit*, by avoiding the *Sins of the Flesh* which he mentions, and discharging the Duties of a Holy and Christian Conversation. Before he concludes, he takes Notice of the Reason why some *Judaizing* Christians were so desirous to have them *circumcised* according to the Law (o), *that they might glory in their Flesh*, in procuring them to be circumcised ; whereby, for their pretended Zeal in promoting the legal Observances among the *Gentiles*, those false Teachers might avoid Persecutions from the *Jews*, who were in all Places the violent Persecutors of the Christian Professors : Whereas himself only gloried in the Knowledge and Profession of *the Cross of Christ*, however it was so great a Scandal to the *Jews*.

### *Observations on the Epistle to the Galatians.*

1st, **T**HAT the *Days, and Months, and Times, and Years* (a), which the Apostle reproves the *Galatians* for observing, were the *Jewish* Sabbath-Days (and the strict ceremonial Rest thereon)

(k) Chap. v. 1.      (l) Ver. 6.      (m) Ver. 13.  
 (n) From Chap. v. 13, &c.      (o) Chap. vi. 12.  
 (a) Chap. iv. 9, 10.



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thereon) their New Moons, and solemn Feasts of the Passover, and the like, enjoined in *Moses's* Law (*b*), which were only Shadows of Christ and the Gospel, and could not be effectual to their Justification by Christ, but rather a Hindrance to it (*c*). Besides, such Observances might *carry off* the Christian Converts to the *Jewish* Religion, and cause them to fall from Christianity. Now this does not at all forbid the Christian Holy-Days, as the Memory of Christ's Birth, and Death, Resurrection, &c. and of the holy Apostles and Saints; the Observance of which would tend to *renew* in our Minds the Benefits of our holy Religion, and so keep us the more steadfast to it.

2dly, That *the Liberty* which the Apostle here instructs the Church to *stand fast in*, is a Freedom from the Yoke of the old *Levitical* Law, as Circumcision, &c. (*d*), and not, as many fancy, a Liberty of chusing what Religion they please, and renouncing Subjection to the Governors of the Church.

3dly, That to indulge ourselves in the sinful Lusts of the Flesh, is to live a heathenish Life, and is utterly inconsistent with the Spirit of Christianity, and the Hopes of Heaven (*e*).

4thly, That Idolatry (which is the giving to a Creatnre, Saint or Angel, or Image, religious and divine Worship) is reckoned by the Apostle amongst the most crying Sins of Adultery, Drunkenness, Witchcraft, &c. (*f*)

*Design*

(*b*) Compare *Coloss.* ii. 16, 17. (*c*) *Chap.* v. 4, &c.

(*d*) *Chap.* v. 1, 2. (*e*) *Chap.* v. 16, &c.

(*f*) *Chap.* v. 19, 20, 21.

*Design of the Epistle to the Ephesians, or the Christians at Ephesus.*

**E**PHEBUS was the Metropolis or Head City of the *Proconsular Asia* (by which is meant a Country on the *Western Part* of the *Lesser Asia*). St. Paul had often been there, and had settled the Christian Religion amongst them; which was from thence propagated throughout all *Asia* (a). He being a Prisoner at *Rome* (b), sent them this Epistle: The chief Design of the first Part whereof was to preserve them from the *Judaizers*, who held the Necessity of observing the Ceremonial Law, and to that End, to put them in mind of God's infinite Love to them in their Redemption, and of their glorious Privilege of being Christians; whereby, though they were, most of them, *Gentiles* by Nature (c), and so *Strangers to the Covenant of the Promise*, which God made with *Abraham*, and his Posterity the *Jews*; yet now they were of *God's Household*, as well as the believing *Jews* themselves, according to God's *Purpose from the Foundation of the World*, which he had made known by the Gospel; an Evidence or Seal of which was their receiving the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Spirit; and therefore there was no Necessity for them to observe the Law of *Moses*, in order to their Justification and Salvation (as the false Teachers pretended there was) for they were *saved* by the *Grace* and *Mercy* of God in *Jesus Christ*, and not by *Works* of the Law (d), and they were admitted to the same Privileges with the rest

(a) *Acts* xix. 10. and xx. 31.  
xxviii. 16.

(c) *Chap.* ii. 11,

(b) *Ephes.* iii. 1. and *Acts*

(d) *Chap.* ii. 8, 9.

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rest of God's Church. This Doctrine of the Salvation of the *Gentiles* by Christ, he tells them, God particularly revealed to him; and therefore encourages them in their Faith in Christ. This is the Substance of the three first Chapters.

Afterwards (*e*), he presses them to live up to the Christian Profession, by maintaining Unity among themselves, that every one's Gift and Office might tend to the Edification of the whole Church (according to God's Purpose in vouchsafing the Gifts, and establishing the Christian Offices); and by *putting off the Old Man*, not conforming to that corrupted State we derive from the *old* or *first Adam*, but avoiding their old heathenish Sins; as Lying, Wrath, Stealing, filthy Discourses, Envy and Malice, Uncharitableness and Variance, Fornication and Adultery, Covetousness, and Drunkenness: However, many of these might have been connived at, or allowed of (*f*) by their heathenish Philosophers, yet they bring the Wrath of God on the Offenders. And on the contrary, that they *put on the New Man*, conformable to that State of Regeneration or Grace, wherein we are placed by Faith in Christ, the Second or *New Adam*, bringing forth the Fruits of the Spirit in general, by a circumspect and holy Life; to which they were the more obliged by that Light and Knowledge vouchsafed to them; and also by performing the Duties of their particular Relations, whether as Wives, Husbands, Children, Parents, Servants, Masters; concluding, that if they would stand fast in their Christian Course against all Temptations, their Armour must be  
Truth,

(*e*) Chap. iv. to the End of the Epistle.

(*f*) Grotius in Chap. v. 4, to 8.



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Truth, Righteousness, Peaceableness, Faith, Hope,  
the Holy Word of God, and devout Prayer.

*Observation on the Epistle to the Ephesians.*

**T**HAT God's Acceptance of us *Gentiles*, as well as the Posterity of *Abraham*, should engage us the more earnestly to cast off all Vice, as what would deprive us of our Privileges, and to be the more zealous to live answerable to our holy Profession and glorious Hopes (g).

*Design of the Epistle to the Philippians, or the  
Christians at Philippi.*

*Philippi* was an eminent City in *Macedonia* in *Greece*, where *St. Paul* had preached and converted many (a). They hearing of his Imprisonment at *Rome*, made a Collection for his Relief, and sent it by *Epaphroditus*, who sickened at *Rome*, but recovered, and returned again to *Philippi* (b). By him *St. Paul* sent them this Epistle; in which he kindly acknowledges their Respects for him, and for the Gospel; assuring them his Imprisonment and Troubles were a Joy to him, because they tended, by his Example of Courage under them, to make the Gospel be the more taken Notice of, and promulgated at *Rome*.

But the particular Design of the Epistle appears to be the same with the former to the *Ephesians*; viz. To keep them steadfast in the true Faith, both in respect to any Persecutions they might suffer for the Sake thereof, and also in respect to the  
*Judaizing*

(g) Chap. iv. 17, &c.

(a) Acts xvi. 12. (b) Chap. ii. 25, &c. and Chap. iv. 18.

*Judaizing* Christians ; and first, That they be not affrighted out of their holy Profession in Times of Persecution, but stand fast in the Faith ; to which Purpose he also very passionately, and with great Earnestness, presses them to avoid Diffension, and maintain Union ; and to this End, that they carry themselves humbly, and with Lowly-mindedness one towards another, after Christ's Example. This is the Substance of the first and second Chapters.

Then secondly (*c*), he cautions them to beware of the *Judaizers*, who would plant the same evil Doctrine there, as in other Churches, concerning the Obligation to the Law of *Moses*, as to Circumcision, and other *Judaical* Rites, so often mentioned before. As for his Part, none could lay more Claim to the Privileges which the *Jews* prized, than himself ; yet he accounted all such but *Loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ*. He propounds himself a Pattern for their Imitation in this Respect, and in promoting Unity and a true heavenly Conversation. He lastly, expresses his Satisfaction in their Charity towards him, and concludes.

*Observations on the Epistle to the Philippians.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**HAT a Forwardness and Disposition to relieve Christians in Distress was the Temper of the antient and first Christians (*a*).

2<sup>dly</sup>, That the Holy Ghost hath frequently shewed it to be a Matter of great Moment, to avoid Division, and to preserve Unity in the Church (*b*).

*Design*

(*c*) *Chap. iii, &c.*

(*a*) *Chap. iv. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.*

(*b*) *Chap. i. 27. ii. 1, 2, 3. and iii. 15, 16.*

*Design of the Epistle to the Colossians, or the Christians at Coloss.*

COLOSS was a City in *Phrygia*, in the *Lesser Asia*. Though *St. Paul* had gone over all that Country (c), yet some believe he did not go to every particular City, and that he had not been at *Coloss* (d). That City had the Gospel preached to them by one *Epaphras* (e), whom *St. Paul* is supposed to have sent thither. The Apostle being a Prisoner at *Rome* (f), and having understood by this *Epaphras* their State (g), sent them this Epistle, encouraging them (h) in their Christian Profession, and Perseverance therein, after the same Manner as he did to the *Ephesians*, from the Consideration of God's Love in making them, who were *Gentiles*, and *sometime alienated*, equally with the *Jews*, *Partakers* of Salvation through Christ; and also cautioning them not to be deceived by those *Hereticks*, who corrupted (i) the Christian Religion by their pretended Philosophy (k), containing a Mixture of *Jewish* and *Heathenish* Doctrines; who also imposed the Observance of the Law of *Moses*, as to Circumcision, the *Jewish* Festival Days, New Moons, and Sabbaths, and unclean Meats; and also on Pretence of the Majesty of God, and their own Humility, pleading for the Worshipping of Angels, to procure them their Mediators to God; and lastly, pretending a more than ordinary Self-Denial and Abstinence.

Against

- (c) *Acts* xviii. 23. (d) From *Chap.* i. 4. and ii. 1.  
 (e) *Chap.* i. 7. (f) *Chap.* iv. 18. (g) *Chap.* i. 8.  
 (h) *Chapters* i. ii.  
 (i) *Grotius* in c. 2.  
 (k) See the Fourth Practical Observation on 1 Cor.



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Against these, and such like, either *Jewish* or *Heathen Ordinances*, the Apostle cautions the Christians at *Coloss (l)*.

Afterwards (*m*) he stirs them up, as before he had done the *Ephefians*, to a true Christian Behaviour, by avoiding those their old *Heathenish* Sins he there mentions, that are contrary to a Christian Profession, and labouring after such holy Dispositions, as are agreeable to the Gospel of Christ; and also by performing the Duties of their several Relations, as Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Masters and Servants. He concludes with an Exhortation to earnest and constant Prayer, and with some particular Salutations.

### *Observations on the Epistle to the Colossians.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **H**ERE again the Apostle very evidently explains himself concerning the Case of observing Days, and declares he means the *Jewish Ordinances* of New Moons, and Sabbath-Days, &c. which were a *Shadow of Things* under the Gospel (*a*).

2<sup>dly</sup>, That the Idolatry of worshipping Angels, under Pretence of Humility towards the Great God, was the Doctrine of the worst of Hereticks, who did not *hold the Head*; that is, were not true Members of Christ's Body the Church (*b*).

3<sup>dly</sup>, That the Fault, which the Apostle checks some of the *Colossians* for, in being *subject to Ordinances*, and the *Commandments* and Doctrines of *Men*, and going back to the *Rudiments of the World*, and the like, consisted in this; namely, their

(*l*) Chap. ii. 16. to the End of that Chapter.

(*m*) Chapters iii. and iv.

(*a*) Chap. ii. 16, 17. (*b*) Chap. ii. 18, 19.

their Subjection to the *Jewish* Ordinances so often mentioned before, and the Doctrine and Discipline of some heathen Philosophers and conceited Hereticks, who pretended to a more perfect Way, and stricter Abstinence than ordinary: This was not intended to disparage Government, and Subjection to the Christian Church, or a Compliance in what is decent, and for Edification (c).

4thly, Nor doth the Apostle condemn *Philosophy* (d), and human Learning, as considered in it self; forasmuch as it is the great Improver of our Reason, and that which teaches us the Knowledge of God and of Virtue, as far as that arises from the Nature of Things in this World; insomuch, that sound Philosophy was, in the Primitive Times, often the (e) Foundation of Christianity, and was with great Success made use of by the Antients in defending it, and convincing its Gainsayers: But Philosophy is here spoken against, with respect to the Abuse and Corruption of it, as having espoused many fond and absurd Principles, and abetted many undue Practices; and therefore, the Apostle bids the first Christians, *Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

5thly, To this Purpose (besides the Medley of *Judaism* and *Paganism*, which was one Effect of the vain Philosophy of some Hereticks of those Times mentioned in this Chapter) we may here reflect upon some other Traditions of Men, and Rudiments of this World, which might occasion St. Paul to caution the Christians to beware of them: We read

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(f) of

(c) Chap. ii. 20, 21. (d) Ver. 8.

(e) As in Justin Martyr, and others.

(*f*) of two eminent Sects of *Philosophers* who encounter'd St. Paul; viz. the *Epicureans* and *Stoicks*. The vain Principles of the first of these were such as follow: They taught that the World was made by Chance, and a casual Concourse of Atoms (or small Particles of Matter meeting together) that there was no Providence of God, who would not trouble himself with Men and their Affairs; that Happiness consisted in sensual Pleasures; that there was no future Existence of Souls, nor any Life after this. The other Sort, the *Stoicks*, pretended a fatal and irrevocable Necessity of Actions and Things, and that Good was not to be done for a Reward. These last put on an affected Gravity and Unconcernedness at surprising Events and Misfortunes; and generally, the Philosophers were a Set of People immoderately proud, desirous of Fame, and given to Wrangling and vain Disputes. These and the like, to be sure, were Doctrines and Practices *not* after Christ; but still they were the *Rudiments* and *Principles* of some particular Sects and Persons, and a Corruption of true Philosophy and Learning; which, without that Corruption, enabled many Primitive Fathers and Martyrs (as hath been already intimated) to become, through the Assistance of the Divine Spirit, glorious Champions for the Christian Religion (*g*).

6thly, That the strict Observation of the Duties of our several *Relations*, whether as Husbands or Wives, Parents or Children, Masters or Servants, is one principal Part of our Christian Religion (*b*).

*Design*

(*f*) *Acts* xvii. 18.

(*g*) See the Fourth Observation on the First to the *Corinthians*.

(*b*) *Chap.* iii. 18, &c.



*Design of the Two Epistles to the Thessalonians, or the Christians at Thessalonica.*

**T**hessalonica was the chief City of Macedonia in Greece, where St. Paul had planted a Christian Church (a), which consisted of some converted Jews, and a great Number of Gentiles, some of which are called *Devout Greeks*, being probably Profelytes of the Gate (b). That a great Part were Gentiles converted, appears from the Apostle's saying, they *turned to God from Idols* (c). The Apostle understanding by Timothy their Steadfastness, wrote this Epistle to confirm them in the Christian Faith, which they had received from him, and in a Perseverance therein, notwithstanding any Tribulation or Persecutions (d). (The Apostle might in particular mean that Persecution, to which the unbelieving Jews, according to their usual manner, excited the Gentiles) (e). To this Purpose in the following Chapters, he instructs them in a godly Course of Life, and comforts them with the glorious Hopes of the Resurrection, and of being *for ever with the Lord Jesus*. This should satisfy them in the midst of their Concern for their deceased Friends, especially if any were persecuted to Death for the Cause of Religion.

He farther shews (f), that *the day of the Lord*, or the Time of Christ's Coming to Judgment at the general Resurrection (g) (of which he was

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treating

(a) Chap. ii. 13. and Acts xvii. 1. (b) Acts xvii. 1, to 5.

(c) Chap. i. 9. (d) Chap. i. 2, 3. (e) Acts xvii. 5.

(f) Chap. v.

(g) See the Eighth General Remark on the Epistles, towards the latter End.

treating just before in the latter Part of the foregoing Chapter) was uncertain, and that it would surprize the ungodly World; but for those that are Christians, they need not be afraid, provided they lived as such, in that holy Conversation, which he instructs them in, to the End of the *First Epistle*.

*As to the Second Epistle to the Theſſalonians*, St. Paul, in his former Epistle (*b*), had put the Christians of *Theſſalonica* in Hopes of coming again to them; but being prevented, he sent this second Epistle, much to the same Purpose as the former, to encourage them in Perseverance, and comfort them in their Sufferings, shewing God's Judgments on all those that *obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*, but the glorious Reward which waited for them that obeyed.

And, because they mistook his former Epistle (*i*) about Christ's Coming to Judgment, lest they should be shaken in Mind, because it was not to be immediately; he shews (*k*), in this second Epistle, that (according as he told them formerly) that terrible Judgment was not to fall on the Ungodly, till after some Things came to pass, he now mentions, *viz.* a great Apostacy or Falling away from the Faith, and the *Antichrist* (or grand Opposer of Christ) being more plainly discovered.

Some (*l*) by the *coming of Christ*, and the *day of Christ* (*m*), understand the Coming of Christ to destroy the unbelieving Jews and their Temple, of which they suppose the Christians might be over inquisitive

(*b*) Chap. iii. 11. (*i*) In Chap. v. 1, &c. (*k*) Chap. ii.

(*l*) Grotius, and Hammond in 1 Theſſ. v. 2.

(*m*) Mentioned Chap. ii. 1, 2. and in the former Epistle, Chap. v.

inquisitive to know the Time; in which Sense the Coming of Christ is used (*n*). But yet this Passage seems to refer to the same Time which the like Phrase doth four times in the former Epistle (*o*); and that is to the Day of Judgment.

Afterwards (*p*), the Apostle returns again to encourage and comfort them; giving them some Instructions, particularly to avoid Idleness, and the disorderly Behaviour of some *Busybodies*; and then concludes with a Christian Salutation.

*Observations on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**HAT the Hopes of being with Christ for ever in Glory, was enough to support the Primitive Christians under the greatest Sufferings; we therefore should often encourage and comfort ourselves with these Hopes, and so look above the World, and the Troubles of it (*q*).

2<sup>dly</sup>, The Apostle's Charge (*r*), *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good*, hath been misunderstood by some, to encourage a running after various Teachers, and Ways of religious Worship, under Pretence of trying all Religions first, before they settle; whereas the Word *Prove* doth not mean to Practice or Experience, but particularly to examine and enquire into all the Spiritual Gifts vouchsafed in those Times, as of *Prophecys* mentioned in the foregoing Verse, and that according to the Gift of *discerning Spirits* then in

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(*n*) Matt. xxiv. 2, 3. Jam. v. 7, 8, 9. (*o*) Viz. Chap. ii. 19. iii. 13. iv. 15. and v. 23. (*p*) Chap. ii. 13, &c.

(*q*) 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17, 18. 2 Thess. ii. 16. (*r*) 1 Thess. v. 21.



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the Church (*s*). So (*t*), *Try the Spirits whether they be of God.* If this Precept, *Prove all things, &c.* be understood in general, then it signifies, examine and try the Truth of every Doctrine or Practice, how it is agreeable to the Proportion of Faith, the Doctrine of Christ taught by the Apostle, and then *hold fast that which is good*, or agreeable thereto.

### *Design of the Epistles to Timothy.*

**S***AIN*T Paul had taken *Timothy* to travel with him, and to assist him in planting the Gospel (*a*). He put his Hands on Him, which some interpret Ordained him, with the Assistance of the Presbytery ; (*b*) as afterward in the Primitive Church (*c*), the Bishop ordained with the Assistance of the Presbyters. At length the Apostle is said to constitute him Bishop at *Ephesus* (*d*), the Metropolis or Head City in that Part of *Asia*, which is called the *Proconsular Asia* ; and some time after that, he wrote this Epistle to him. He calls him his *Son*, as being converted (*e*) by him to the Christian Religion, whereby the Apostle became his Spiritual Father. *Timothy* had been instructed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, ever since he was a Child, by his Grandmother and Mother, being both religious *Jewesses*, and also made Converts to the Christian Faith before him (*f*).

The

(*s*) 1 Cor. xii. 10.      (*t*) 1 John iv. 1.

(*a*) Acts xvi. 3.

(*b*) 2 Tim. i. 6. compared with this 1 Epistle iv. 14.

(*c*) Grotius in 1 Tim. iv. 14.

(*d*) Euseb. Hist. l. 3 c. 4. Chrysost. Hom. 15. in 1 Tim. v. 19. Hammond on the Title to 1 Tim. Dr. Cave's Life of Timothy.      (*e*) Cave, *ibid*.

(*f*) Acts xvi. 1. 2 Tim. i. 5.

The Design of this Epistle appears (g), that *Timothy* might know how to behave himself in the Church of God; that is, to instruct him how to discharge his great Office, both as to his own Behaviour, and also that of others, whether the inferior Clergy or People; and how to order some Part of the publick Service, by *Supplications, Prayers, and giving of Thanks*; and warns him against some *Judaizing*, or other Hereticks and false Teachers, particularly not to give heed to their *Fables* (h) and *Genealogies* (i), nor their Doctrines, *forbidding of Marriage, and Meats* (k).

There are three Passages in this Epistle to be particularly considered. The first is (l), where the Apostle says, that Women should be in Subjection to their Husbands, because *the Woman* (Eve) *being deceived, was in the Transgression*; i. e. being tempted by the Serpent, the Devil, to eat the forbidden Fruit (m), she was first prevailed on, and so became the Means of Man's Fall; but for the Comfort of the Female Sex, he affirms that the Woman *notwithstanding shall be saved in*, or by, (n) *Child-bearing*; which may import, either that she should go through Child-bearing-Pangs with Safety, or else her Soul should be saved by Child-bearing; that is, by Christ's being born of a Woman, the Virgin *Mary*; whereby the same Sex became also instrumental to Man's Salvation, as before to his Fall, to his Destruction.

2dly, Among the Characters of a Bishop (o) one is, that he be *the Husband of one Wife*; which may

T 4

(g) Chap. iii. 14, 15.

(h) See Grotius in Chap. i. 4.

(i) Chap. i. (k) Chap. iv. (l) Chap. ii 14, 15.

(m) Gen. iii. 6.

(n) Δια της τεκνογονίας.

(o) Chap. iii. 2.

be understood as having but one Wife at a time (*p*), whereas the *Gentiles*, before their Conversion, had sometimes two or three; which they might be permitted still to retain, even after they were baptized, to avoid Confusion (for which of them could the Husband chuse to part with?) though Christians were not suffered to be married to more than one, during the Life of that one, after Conversion: However, a Plurality of Wives was so far discouraged, that whoever had been married to more than one at the same time, while he was a *Gentile*, was not allowed to be put into the Ministry, though he was a Convert to Christianity. One Objection against this Interpretation is, that in this same Epistle (*q*), a Widow was to be chosen into the Service of the Church, being *the wife of one man*; but a Woman among the *Gentiles* was not allowed many Husbands at once. It is replied, that here is a different Case; and that if the Phrase in this last Passage (*r*), cannot be so interpreted, it does not therefore follow, that the other may not. Another Sense of *the husband of one wife* may be (*s*), as not having divorced one Wife, and taken another, as was usual among *Jews* and *Gentiles*. And this Sense agrees with another Place (*t*); for Women were wont to divorce themselves, and marry another Husband, among *Jews* and *Gentiles* also (*u*). As for a third Interpretation, of not marrying a second Wife after the Death of the

(*p*) Gerhard. Loc. Com. Tom. VII. de Conjugio. §. 214.  
Calvin. in loc. *Bishop Blackall's Sermon*. Vol. III. p. 319.

(*q*) Chap. v. 9. (*r*) In Chap. v.

(*s*) Hammond in loc. *Dr. Whitby on 1 Tim. v. 9. and on 1 Cor. vii. 11.*

(*t*) Chap. v. 9.

(*u*) Ibid.



the first, but continuing a Widower ; it is true, some ancient Canons enjoin this to the Clergy (at the first, no Doubt, by reason of the Heathen Persecutions) but then the Opinions and Practice of the Antients varied in this Matter ; some understanding the Place, of those (y) who had more Wives than one at a Time, or had put away one, and married another. However, it is certain, some very ancient Catholick Bishops were twice married (z), after the Decease of a former Wife. And since the End of Marriage is not only for the Propagation of Children, but also mutual Comfort, and a Remedy against Fornication ; it cannot be conceived, why a first Marriage should be allowed for such Ends, and not a second ; when there may be as much Occasion, in order to such Ends, for a second Marriage, as for a first.

3dly, The *Widow indeed* (a), appears to be (b) one who was altogether destitute, deprived of the Help of Husband or Child, exemplary, pious, and devout ; of sixty Years of Age, the Wife of one Husband (that is, either who had not been twice married ; or, as others, who had not formerly, before Conversion, parted with one Husband and married another, as was (c) usual among the *Jews* and *Heathen*, as before observed). Such a one was to be received into the Roll or List of those who were maintained by the Church Alms : And some of them were *Servants of the Church*, or Deaconesses (d), who were to be employed for the

(y) Chrysost. Theodoret in loc.

(z) Tertul. de Monogamia, c. 12. See more in Mr. Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book IV. Chap. 5.

(a) Mentioned Chap. v.

(b) Grotius and Whitby in loc.

(c) Ibid.

(d) As *Phæbe* was, Rom. xvi. 1.

the relieving other destitute Christians, out of the Church's Stock, and otherwise in the Church's Service; especially towards those of their own Sex, as in Sickneſs, or when they were baptized, &c. it being more decent for them to attend on their own Sex on ſuch Occaſions, than for Deacons or other Men to do it.

The Deſign of the *ſecond Epistle* is again to ſtir up *Timothy* to be zealous and diligent in his Office, patient in Troubles, and conſtant to the holy Doctrine which *St. Paul* had taught him; as alſo to warn him againſt the falſe Teachers, whether *Jews* or others (as in the *firſt Epistle*): of their ſly Behaviour, and their *fooliſh Questions* and *Fables*; and to inſtruct him farther how to behave himſelf, in Imitation of *St. Paul's* own Example, *manner of Life*, and *Patience*, that at laſt he might obtain with him a Crown of Life; which *St. Paul* himſelf ſhortly expected; *for he was ready to be offered, and the time of his departure was at hand* (e).

The Names of *Jannes* and *Jambres*, two *Egyptian* Magicians, *who withſtood Moſes* (when he wrought the Miracles before *Pharaoh*) (f), are not mentioned by *Moſes* in his Hiſtory; but they were (g) in ſome ancient Records of the *Jews*, which were extant and known in the Apoſtle's Time.

### *Deſign of the Epistle to Titus.*

**T**HIS *Titus* had been, it ſeems, converted to the Chriſtian Faith, or confirmed in it, by *St. Paul*; who therefore calls him his *Son* (as he

(e) Chap. iv. 6. (f) Chap. iii. 8.

(g) Grotius and Hammond in loc.

he did *Timothy*): Afterwards St. Paul is said (b) to make him Bishop of the Island of *Crete*. The Design of this Epistle is, like those to *Timothy*, to direct *Titus* how to discharge his Office in ordaining others, and in opposing and censuring *Gain-sayers*, or false Teachers, and *Hereticks*; especially *they of the circumcision, with all Jewish fables, and foolish Questions, and Strivings about the Law* (i), whether of the *Jews*, or *Judaizing Christians*; and in teaching the People their Duty.

*Observations on the First and Second Epistles to Timothy, and the Epistle to Titus.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**H A T the Government of the Church by Bishops, was an Apostolical Ordinance, forasmuch as St. Paul placed *Timothy* Bishop of *Ephesus*, and *Titus* Bishop of *Crete* (k), as the Antients testify; and in these Epistles gave them Instructions concerning the Government of the inferior Clergy, and the People in those Churches; particularly, *Timothy* was impowered to discharge the Office of a Bishop, viz. to prove and admit others to the ministerial Function (l), to encourage and reward them (m), and to exercise Discipline (n). And likewise to *Titus* was given Episcopal Authority, to set in order Affairs of the Churches, and ordain Elders (o). By this, such who conceive the Order of Bishops not sufficiently

(b) Euseb. Hist. 1. 3. c. 4. Chrysost. Hom. 1. in c. 2. Hammond on the Title.

(i) Chap. i. 10. and iii. 9.

(k) As it hath been said before. See also Dr. Cave's Lives of Timothy and Titus.

(l) 1 Tim. iii. 10.

(m) Chap. v. 17.

(n) Chap. v. 19, 20, 21.

(o) Tit. i. 5.



ciently prescribed in Scripture (and therefore conceive it not absolutely necessary to the Church) may see plainly that the *Offices* in Government, Ordination, and the Exercise of Discipline, are directly prescribed therein, as belonging to one single Person (though they are more fully explained and cleared in the Accounts of the Primitive Church) nor is there any more Reason to pretend, that *Timothy* and *Titus* were *particular and occasional* Officers, than that the Epistles, which were wrote to them, were only particular and occasional Writings: But the Christian Church preserving these Epistles, as of constant and perpetual Use, did thereby suppose the same kind of Office to continue, for the Sake whereof those excellent Epistles were written. And we have no greater Assurance that these Epistles were written by St. *Paul*, than we have that there were Bishops to succeed the Apostles in the Care and Government of the Churches (*p*): And St. *Chrysostom* gives this as the Reason why, of all his Disciples and Followers, St. *Paul* wrote Epistles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, and not to *Silas* or *Luke*; because he had committed to them the Care and Government of the Churches, while he reserved the others as Attendants and Ministers to go along with himself (*q*). Once more; “ Either there was at *Ephesus* and *Crete* a Presbytery, that is, a College of  
 “ Presbyters, with a Power of ordaining Presbyters and Deacons without a Bishop; or there  
 “ was not: If there were such Colleges with such  
 “ a Power, then was there no need of St. *Paul*’s  
 “ sending

(*p*) *Bishop Stillingfleet’s Cases*, Edit. 2. p. 8. *Bishop Beveridge’s Codex Can. Eccles. Prim.* l. 2. c. 11. and *Bishop Potter’s Government of the ancient Church*, Chap. 4.

(*q*) *Chrysost. Argument. in 1 Tim.*

“ sending *Timothy* and *Titus* thither for that Purpose: But if there were not, then had *Timothy* and *Titus* the sole Power of Ordination in those Places, by Apostolical Commission (r)”: And even where there were Presbyters already settled, as they were at *Ephesus* (s), some few Years before St. *Paul* wrote to *Timothy*. It is true indeed, that *Timothy* often accompanies St. *Paul* in planting Churches, and the Apostle sent for him to *Rome* (t), and also charged him (u), to do the work of an *Evangelist*, or a Propagator of the Gospel in divers Countries; yet that only shews, that *Timothy* was by the Holy Ghost employed in both Offices at different Times; viz. to propagate the Gospel, and also to govern a particular Church: For it is evident, that the *Gift of Government* was distinct from that of an *Evangelist* (x).

2dly, That the first Christians were subject to their Bishops, and guided by them in Matters of religious Behaviour; otherwise St. *Paul* had in vain given *Timothy* and *Titus* those Directions for Government.

3dly, That to pray to Saints and Angels to procure their Intercession for us, is against the Apostle's Doctrine, who has declared, that as there is but one God, so there is one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus (y). The Papists pretend, that they make the Saints only Mediators of Intercession, as if they desired the Saints only to pray to God for them: But their authorized Catechism teaches, that the Saints are to be prayed to, because God bestows Blessings

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(r) Reliqu. Carolin. p. 307.

(s) Acts xx. 17.

(t) 2 Tim. iv. 9.

(u) 2 Tim. iv. 5.

(x) 1 Cor. xii. 28. Eph. iv. 11.

(y) 1 Tim. ii. 5.

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on us for their Merits and Favour (z); and their Practice is accordingly; which makes the Saints Sharers in the *Mediation of Redemption*, and is the greatest Affront and Dishonour to Christ, by whose Merits alone our Prayers are heard.

4thly, That the Doctrines of *Purgatory* (by which the *Papists* understand a Purgation by Torments, of such as indeed depart in the Faith of Christ, but yet must suffer a temporal Punishment) and of *praying for Deliverance of the Deceased* from the Torments of it, or for Ease under them, are not countenanced by St. *Paul's* charitable Prayer for *Onesiphorus*, whom they suppose to have been then dead (a): *The Lord grant unto him, that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day.* For first, it does not appear certainly that *Onesiphorus* was then dead, from St. *Paul's* mentioning (b) *his House*, or *Household only*, himself possibly being then absent, and not returned from *Rome* to *Ephesus*. But secondly, Supposing him to be then dead, St. *Paul's* Prayer was not for Deliverance from Torment in the State between Death and the Resurrection (which is the supposed Torment of the Popish Purgatory) but for Mercy in that Day, the same Day he had before-mentioned (c), viz. the great Day of Judgment. But Mercy in Purgatory, if it do them any good, must be (according to their own Doctrine) before that Day.

5thly, That a wilful Sinner vainly encourages himself from St. *Paul's* acknowledging, (d) that  
he

(z) Catechismus ad Parochos, Pars 3. ad primum præceptum, de Invocatione Sanctorum, §. 24. multa; eorum meritis & gratia in nos Deus confert beneficia.

(a) 2 Tim. i. 18.

(b) Verse 16. and Chap. iv. 19.

(c) Ver. 12.

(d) Chap. i. 15.



he was the *Chief* of Sinners : That being spoken, not in relation to what he was then, but what he had been before his Conversion to Christianity ; when (e) he was a *Blasphemer and a Persecutor, and injurious*, in Opposition to the holy Religion of Jesus. That was his chief Sin, not an habitual Practice of any Vice. As to such he declared on the contrary (f) : *Herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.*

6thly, That blessing the Table, or *saying Grace*, which is, the craving a Blessing from God on our Food, and Thanksgiving afterwards, is a necessary and Christian Practice, encouraged by St. Paul ; who hath taught us (g), that *every Creature of God is good*, — *if it be received with thanksgiving ; for it is sanctified by the word of God*, which hath allowed it for Food (h), and prayer. From the Command (i), *When thou hast eaten, and art full, thou shalt bless the Lord thy God*, the Jews always say Grace (k) ; as our Saviour did (l) : *He took the five Loaves and the two Fishes, and looking up to Heaven, he blessed them, &c.* So did also the ancient Christians (m) ; nay, even the very Heathens had such a Custom ; and the contrary Practice of too many, of devouring the Creatures which the good God hath made and preserved for our Use, and by whose Blessing it is that we are nourished and refreshed by them ; without  
either

(e) As *Ver.* 13. going before. (f) *Acts* xxiv. 16.

(g) 1 *Tim.* iv. 4, 5. (h) *Gen.* ix. 3.

(i) *Deut.* viii. 10.

(k) P. Fagius in loc. Buxtorf. *Synagog. Judæorum*, c. 12. Leo Modena, *Pars II. Chap.* 10.

(l) *Matt.* xiv. 9.

(m) Non prius discumbitur quàm oratio ad Deum prægustetur. Tertull. *Apolog.* c. 39.

either looking up to Heaven for a Blessing, or returning Thanks for them, is most indecent, unchristian, and atheistical.

*Design of the Epistle to Philemon.*

**T**HIS *Philemon* is said to be a considerable Person (*n*) at *Coloss*: He had been converted by *St. Paul*, as is very probable (*o*). The Occasion of this Epistle was thus; *Philemon* had a Servant named *Onesimus*, who ran away from him, and in his Ramble was got as far as *Rome*; there *St. Paul*, being a Prisoner, met with him, and converted him to the Faith; which is the Meaning of that (*p*), *Whom I have begotten in my bonds*. *St. Paul* writes this Epistle, and sends *Onesimus* with it to his Master *Philemon*: In it he rejoiceth in *Philemon's* persisting in the Faith of Christ, and shewing so good an Effect of it, by his charitable refreshing the poor Christians; but the chief Design was to request *Philemon* to entertain once more his old Servant *Onesimus*, and to forgive him the former Injury, as one that now, being a Christian, would be the more faithful and diligent.

*Observations on the Epistle to Philemon.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**H A T the embracing an Opportunity of doing a good Turn to another (how mean soever he may be) as to Soul or Body, is a most Christian Apostolical Practice. How careful was *St. Paul*, first to convert this Vagabond Servant,

(*n*) *Hammond on the Title.*  
(*p*) In *Ver.* 10.

(*o*) *Ver.* 19.

Servant, and then to restore him to his Master's Favour !

2dly, That it is the Duty of a Master to forgive, and be reconciled to an injurious and negligent Servant, on his Repentance, Submission, and Reformation.

*Design of the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

THE Author of this Epistle was St. *Paul*, as the most ancient Fathers declare (q). He doth not indeed begin with his Name, as in other Epistles, *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ* (as it is supposed) for this Reason ; because he was made an Apostle, not so much of the Circumcision, that is, of the *Jews* (to whom this Epistle was sent) as of the *Gentiles* ; who were most properly his Charge (r). Again (s), we read that the Author had *Timothy* for his Companion, and wrote from *Italy*, and intreated the *Hebrews* to pray for him, that he might be restored to them the sooner ; all which most agrees with St. *Paul*'s Circumstances, and Manner of Writing (t).

Lastly, In the forementioned (u) Chapter of this Epistle, he calls *Timothy*, *our Brother Timothy*, as it was customary with St. *Paul* to call him, when he wrote to others (x).

By the *Hebrews*, are probably meant, in this Place, those of the *Jewish* People who had re-

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ceived

(q) Du Pin of the Canon on this Epistle. Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 10, &c. and p. 26.

(r) Acts xxii. 21. Rom. xi. 13.

(s) In Chap. xiii. of this Epistle, Ver. 18. to the End.

(t) For which see Philemon, Ver. 1. Rom xv. 30, 31. 2 Theff. iii. 1.

(u) Chap. xiii.

(x) 2 Cor. i. 1. Col. i. 1.



ceived the Faith, and lived in or near their own Country *Judea*: Many of these were in Danger of falling away upon a twofold Account; either, First, Being staggered by the Arguments of the unbelieving *Jews*, who were zealous for the Law of *Moses*, and maintained the Excellency and Necessity of the old Legal Institutions and Sacrifices, which were at first appointed by God, who had wrought so many Miracles among them, and sent so many Prophets to direct and encourage the Observation of those very Ordinances, and that for so many Ages past: Or, Secondly, Because whatever *Jews* were converted to Christianity, they were most bitterly persecuted, through the Assistance or Connivance of the *Roman* Power, by their unbelieving Brethren and Countrymen (*y*); insomuch, that some had already forsaken the Christian publick Assemblies (*z*). Now this being the Case, the Apostle labours to keep them steady in their Christian Profession; to which Purpose (*a*), he sets forth the Excellency of Christ, as to his Nature, he being the *Son of God*, and far above *Angels*, according to the Prophecy in the Book of *Psalms* concerning him: That the Account which his Apostles gave of him, was sufficiently confirmed by *Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles* wrought by them in Confirmation of their Doctrine; that he took on him the Nature of Man in the Seed of Abraham, that so by suffering *Death* himself, he might (through the Value of his precious Blood) both make void the Design of the *Devil* (to keep Men under the Power of eternal Death) and also by Sufferings *be made like unto* us,

(*y*) 1 *Thess.* ii. 14, 15.      (*z*) *Heb.* x. 25.  
 (*a*) In *Chap.* i, ii, iii, and iv, to *Ver.* 14.

us, and be thereby the more inclined, and the better qualified to compassionate and succour us; that he was more excellent than *Moses*, who indeed was *faithful*, yet was but like a *Servant* in another House; and though *Joshua* gave the *Israelites Rest* in *Canaan*, yet the *Rest* which Christ gives in Heaven is far more excellent; which we should therefore *labour to enter into*.

Farther (*b*), the Apostle shews the Excellency of Christ's *Priesthood*, particularly, that in him two famous Prophecies in the Book of *Psalms* are fulfilled; such as, first (*c*), *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee* (by raising him from the Dead, in order to be an heavenly Priest and King) (*d*). The second Prophecy (*e*), (wherein is a Confirmation by an *Oath*) runs: *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedeck*. Aaron's Priesthood had its Beginning in *Moses's* Law, and the Priests after his Order died, and wanted others to succeed them; but our Lord is the only *Priest after the order of Melchisedeck*; that is, a Priest who had no Ordination from Man, and also who never shall die, or want a Successor, but continues for ever (as there is no Account given of *Melchisedeck's* Father, *Descent*, or *Posterity*, nor of any *Beginning* or *End*, or *Succession* in his Office, as is of the Priests under the Law.) And farther, as *Melchisedeck* was a *King* and *Priest* too (as was usual in the first Ages of the World) so Christ, a *King* as well as a *Priest*, hath full Power for ever to bless all his Church; and since God dealt with their Father *Abraham*, not only by *Promise*, but

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(*b*) In *Chap. iv. 14.* and *Chap. v. &c. to the ixth.*

(*c*) *Psal. ii. 7.*      (*d*) As *Acts xiii. 33.*

(*e*) *Psal. cx. 4.*

*an Oath (f)*, in like manner we have an Assurance by both those *immutable Things* (a Promise and an Oath) of Christ's eternal Priesthood; not *after the order of Aaron*, and of the *tribe of Levi*, but *after the order of Melchisedeck*. Now, if *Perfection were by the Levitical Priesthood*, as it was in the Law, what farther need was there, that another Priest should rise after the Order of Melchisedeck, as it must be by Virtue of the ancient Prophecy: And this Change of the Priesthood, from Aaron to Melchisedeck, argues a Change also of the Law. And, which is farther to be considered, Priests indeed received Tythes of their Brethren; but so great a Priest was Melchisedeck, the Type of Christ, that even the Patriarch Abraham (and so Levi as being in his Loins) paid him Tythes, and received a Blessing from him; and *fore the Less is blessed of the Greater*. Again, the Apostle argues, that Christ our High Priest had no Sin of his own, like the Levitical Priests, to offer up Sacrifice for; but is the *holy and undefiled Son of God*; who having made one sufficient Offering for Sins, is *set on the right hand of the throne of his Majesty in the Heavens*; and not only so, but Christ is a *Mediator of a better Covenant* than Moses could be under the Law, (as *Jeremiah* foretold (g), not on the Performance of an outward Ceremonial, but an inward true Righteousness, which by his Grace he would work in their Hearts.

Then as for *Sacrifices (h)*, that Sacrifice of himself, which Christ offered on the Cross, was more effectual by far than all the Oblations and Sacrifices

(f) *Gen. xxii. 16, 17.*

(g) *Chap. xxxi. 31, &c.*

(h) *Chap. ix, x.*



fices appointed by the Law of *Moses*. *Aaron* indeed once a Year entered into the Holy of Holies, in the Tabernacle on Earth ; but that was only a Shadow of Heaven, in which Christ our High Priest is entered, to make Intercession for us : So also the Gifts and Sacrifices under the Law were as Types or Figures, and *Shadows*, to signify Christ the great and true Sacrifice ; and those Legal Typical Sacrifices of the Blood of Bulls and Goats, &c. cleansed them indeed from Legal Pollutions (that is, the Defilements by their eating unclean Meats, or neglecting such and such Washings, &c.) but could not, of themselves, make Atonement for, or *take away* the Guilt of Sin, so as that no farther Sacrifice should be needful : That was done by the precious Blood of Christ, the eternal Son of God ; and therefore, they ought to keep steadfast to their Christian Profession, otherwise the Danger would be great, even to their utter Destruction.

This so dangerous Effect of Apostacy, the Apostle twice mentions ; first (*i*), where he tells them, it would be *impossible to renew them again to Repentance*, if, after having been *enlightened* (*κ*) with the Knowledge of Christ, and baptized, and (as a Consequence thereof) endued with the Divine Spirit, and made *Partakers* of the miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost, they should now designedly, and out of a perverse Hatred of Christ and the Gospel, cast off their Holy Religion, and so become Apostates from Christianity, and fall back

U 3

to

(i) In Chap. vi. 4, 5, 6.

(k) Φωτισθέντες; (*enlightened*) signifies those, who, having been instructed in the Knowledge of Christ, and then baptized, were farther enlightened by the Divine Spirit. Just. Martyr. Apol. i. Edit. Grabe, §. 80. & Annotat. Kortholt. in loc.

to *Judaism* ; whereby they would resist all the Evidence that God designed, or that could be offered for their Conviction ; and *crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame* (their casting off the Christian Religion being as a confessing that Christ was justly crucified). The like dangerous Effect of Apostacy the Apostle repeats (l), assuring them, *There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment*, for all such who should disown or slight the *Blood of Christ, and the Holy Spirit of God* ; there being no other Principles of any true Religion, that can be serviceable to their Salvation, no other Means than those which they have forsaken, no other Sacrifice for expiating Sin, no second Baptism, nor any other Holy Spirit or Grace renewing their Minds : And therefore, he exhorts them to Perseverance, notwithstanding any Difficulties or Sufferings (m) ; which as they did not hinder them at the first from becoming Christians, though *they endured a great Fight of Afflictions* ; so now should not, from persevering as such, that they might receive the Promise : Forasmuch as God would *not tarry*, but would both shortly deliver them, and eternally reward them : In the mean time, that they *live by Faith*, until they should actually possess the Promise, to the *saving of the Soul*. What has been hitherto mentioned, is the Substance of the Epistle, from the Beginning to the Eleventh Chapter.

And to the Intent they might so *live by Faith*, and at length *save their Souls*, he goes on (n) to set before them the Power of the Grace of Faith, and proposes the Example of the Saints in former Times,

(l) Chap. x. 26, &amp;c.

(m) Chap. x. 32, &amp;c. to Chap. xi.

(n) Chap. ix.

Times. This *Faith*, he tells them, *is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen* (o); that is, a confident Dependence upon God for the Performance of his Promise, though for the present we do not see it. Thus the Servants of God were renowned of old; of which he gives so many Instances throughout the Eleventh Chapter; and then tells them (p), that all these Examples of Faith and Constancy ought to be Encouragements to them, to *run on with Patience* in their Christian Race; especially seeing Christ himself, *the Author and Finisher of our Faith*, or the Leader and Crowner thereof, by *resisting unto Blood*, or suffering Death (which yet they had not done) by his own Sufferings sanctified Afflictions in this Life, in order to a glorious Reward in Heaven. Nay, even for the present, those very Persecutions and Afflictions, at worst, are the Badges and Tokens of God's fatherly Love to us, rather *chastening us as his Children*, than that we should lose his eternal Bliss.

Afterwards (q), to the End of that Chapter, he instructs them to adorn their Christian Profession by what is very becoming it, namely, Peace and Holiness; being free from Hatred and Variance, and impure Lusts of the Flesh; and (which was all along the main Design) to take heed that no one amongst them be so *profane* a Person, who, like *Esau that sold his Birth-right*, should despise and cast off their glorious Privileges in Christ Jesus, and their Interest in the Gospel, and in being Members of Christ's Holy Church, with the Benefits of the New Covenant through Christ's Blood: Which he expresses, after the *Jewish* Manner, by

U 4

the

(o) Ver. 1. (p) Chap. xii. 1, to 14.

(q) Chap. xii. 14, &c.



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the figurative Terms of *Mount Sion*, and the *heavenly Jerusalem*, with the Dignity of being Members of *the general Assembly* (not consisting of one Nation only, as that of the *Israelites* on *Mount Sinai*, but of all, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*) with an *innumerable Company of Angels*, and *the Church of the first-born* (of *Apostles* and others, who first received the Gospel) whose Names are *written*, or enrolled in *Heaven*, &c. These Privileges were infinitely more valuable than the Law given in *Mount Sinai*, in such a frightful and terrifying Manner, with *Burnings*, and *Thunderings*, and *Lightenings*; nor could that Dispensation under the Law continue without *removing*; but the Happiness under the Gospel *cannot be moved*, but shall always *remain*.

*Lastly*, (r) he gives them sundry particular Directions for a Christian Life and Behaviour, and then again encourages them to persevere in the Faith, and to obey the Governors of the Church, who *had the Rule over them*; and also cautions them against being seduced by their former Leaders, who, whilst they adhere to the *Levitical Sacrifices*, have *no Right* to partake of the Sacrifice of Christ's Death, nor of the Lord's Table, the Christian *Altar*, where that is set forth; no more than they could *eat* of the *Bodies* or *Flesh* of the Sin-Offering under the Law, which was *burnt without the Camp* (s), and was a Type or Representation of our Sin-Offering, which Jesus made *with his own Blood*, when he also (according to that Representation of him) *suffered without the gate*. *Unto him therefore we are to go*, not relying upon the *Mosaical Law*, but the Cross of Christ.

After-

(r) Chap. xiii. 1, &c.

(s) Exod. xxix. 14.

Afterwards the Apostle, requesting their Prayers for him, and beseeching God to keep them in his Service and Favour, concludes this excellent Epistle.

*Observations on the Epistle to the Hebrews.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **I**T is here plainly and distinctly declared, that the *Levitical* Ordinances in *Moses's* Law were Shadows of Christ the Substance; and therefore that those *Mosaical* Ordinances are abolished (or rather cease of themselves) since Christ's appearing in the World (*a*).

2<sup>dly</sup>, That the Design of Christ's Death was, not only to testify the Truth of his Doctrine, or to give us an Example of Patience, or in order to his Resurrection, that he might obtain Power to redeem and sanctify us, or to confirm our Faith and Hopes of Pardon (as some have pretended) but chiefly to *make (b) a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice, Oblation, and Satisfaction for our Sins*. For in this Epistle the Apostle shews, that the Death of Christ was shadowed by the expiatory Sacrifices under the Law; from which the *Jews* expected this Benefit; *viz.* that the Beast slain and sacrificed would be accepted in their Stead, to excuse them from Punishment (*c*). Now the Apostle

(*a*) See the first ten Chapters, and also Chap. xiii. 9. to the 14<sup>th</sup> Verse.

(*b*) Grotius de Satisfactione, c. 1, 10.

(*c*) Obj. Expiatio in Sacrificiis non de ipsâ *maestatione* pecudis, quæ revera fuisset luitio illa, seu pœnæ persolutio; sed Dei iis dicitur quæ *maestationem* consequabantur, ut de asperione sanguinis. Resp. Pœna pecudi irrogabatur, cum pecudi vita adimebatur; sed Deo ritu sacrificali soluta fuit, cum *vita animæ* pecudis Deo, more sacrificali, reddebatur. *Outram de Sacrificiis.*

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file here shews, that the Death of Christ is truly all That, which they expected their legal Sacrifices to be ; that is, such as did *bear the Iniquity*, the Faults and Punishments of the Sinner, and *make an Atonement* for them (*d*). So Christ *was once offered to bear the sins of many* ; and *bath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself* (*e*).

The Stile and common Phrases that were under the Law concerning the Sacrifices for Sin, as a *Propitiation*, an *Atonement*, *bearing Sins*, a *Ransom*, &c. were well known in the New Testament Times (*f*), both among *Jews* and *Gentiles* : Now the Apostles assure us, in the same Stile and Phrases, of the Benefit of Christ's Death ; *viz.* that he died in our Stead, to offer himself truly a Sacrifice for Sins, when they say that Christ's Death was a *Propitiation* (which is a Sacrifice to appease God's Anger) (*g*), and an *Atonement* (which signifies a purging from Sin) (*h*), a being *offered to bear Sins* (*i*) ; and lastly, a giving himself a *Ransom* for us (*k*). The Apostles wrote plainly, and it was of great Concern they should, and that Age could no otherwise understand them.

3dly, In the Papist's Sacrifice of the *Mass*, or Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, they pretend to offer up to God the Father the Body and Blood of his Son Christ, as being substantially present under the Appearances of Bread and Wine (according to the false Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*,) (*l*) and therefore affirm their said Oblation  
in

(*d*) *Lev.* i. 4. and iv. 26. and x. 17.

(*e*) See the first ten Chapters of this Epistle.

(*f*) Grotius *ibid.*

(*g*) 1 *John* xxii.

(*h*) *Rom.* v. 11.

(*i*) *Heb.* ix. 28.

(*k*) 1 *Tim.* ii. 6.

(*l*) For which see the 7th and 8th Observations on 1 *Cor.*



in the Mass to be in itself, or in its own Virtue, a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead. This is directly contrary to the Doctrine of St. Paul, who says (m) that Christ offered one Sacrifice for Sins upon the Cross, and that by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. That by perfecting for ever, St. Paul means the making a Propitiation for, and expiating Sins, appears from the Testimony of the Prophet, which he produces to confirm this, (n) *their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.* Now if Christ on the Cross hath made a perfect and compleat Attonement, Propitiation, and Satisfaction for Sins, by his own offering up himself, once for all, as St. Paul says he did, there is no Occasion for the Repetition of such a Sacrifice, as there was for the Jewish Sacrifices (o); and therefore the Popish Mass, and their Sacrifice, which is so great a Part of their Religious Worship, and on which they so much depend for their Well-being in this World and in the next, and with the Want of which they upbraid the Protestants, hath no Foundation in the Holy Scriptures, but is contrary to it.

And as for the Notion of the ancient Christians, (p) though they call the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper a *Sacrifice*, yet in their Opinion there is not *the thing in itself*; viz. a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice of Christ's real Body, in the Papist's Sense; but a *Commemoration* (q), or re-representing thereof, by *shewing forth the Lord's death*

(m) Chap. x. 10, 12, 14.

(n) Chap. x. 16, 17.

(o) Ver. 11.

(p) Forbesius Hist. Theol. l. 11. c. 20. § 21, 29. Mede's Christian Sacrifice, and his Discourse of the Name Altar.

(q) Luke xxii. 19.

death (r), as it were, *setting before the Father* the Sacrifice of his Son's Death for the Sins of the World, and *pleading the Merit thereof* for Pardon and Acceptance, to the great Comfort of the Faithful. In this Sense they esteemed, that in the Sacrament Christ is *mystically*, as he is said to be, *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world* (s), and that was not verily and indeed, but in a Mystery: So the Eucharist is a *commemorative*, or *representative Sacrifice*, because it is a commemorating, or representing of the only true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice in the Creatures of Bread and Wine, with Prayers and Praises, according to Christ's Institution, in order to partake of Mercy and Pardon through the same: For which Cause they reckoned that their Prayers, for themselves or others, were then more effectual. In which Sense the ancient Christians, even from the purest Antiquity, understand this Prophecy (t), *In every place incense shall be offered in my name, and a pure offering*; and also that Part of Christ's Sermon (u), *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, &c.* and that of the Apostle (x), *We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle* (y). In a Word, this whole Matter is thus explained by two of the most eminent Fathers of the Church. The one is St. Chrysostom on these Words; (z) *Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.* "What then (says he) do we offer every Day? He answers, We offer, indeed,

(r) 1 Cor. xi. 26.

(s) Rev. xiii. 8.

(t) Mal. i. 11.

(u) Mat. v. 23, 24.

(x) Heb. xiii. 10.

(y) For all which, see the Authors last cited.

(z) Heb. ix. 26.

“ deed, but it is by making a *Commemoration of*  
 “ *his Death* ; and this *Sacrifice* is one, and not  
 “ many, because it was once offered ; not as that  
 “ which was carried into the Holy of Holies :  
 “ that was a Figure of this — We offer not  
 “ another, not a different Sacrifice, as the *Jewish*  
 “ High Priest did of old, but still one and the  
 “ same, or rather we perform *the remembrance of*  
 “ *a sacrifice.*” The other ancient Father is St.  
*Austin (a)* : “ The Flesh and Blood (says he) of  
 “ this Sacrifice, *before Christ’s Coming*, was promi-  
 “ sed by the Sacrifice of Resemblance ; *in his*  
 “ *Passion*, it was really and truly given ; *after his*  
 “ *Ascension*, it is celebrated (*per sacramentum me-*  
 “ *morie*) by a Sacrament of Commemoration.”  
 This being a Matter of great Importance, hath  
 been thus plainly laid before the *English Reader*.

4thly, That the *wilful Sin* threatned (*b*), after  
 which *it is impossible to renew them again to repent-*  
*ance*, because for such *there remaineth no more sa-*  
*crifice for sin, but a certain fearful looking for of*  
*indignation*, &c. is not every lapsing in time of  
 Persecution, nor the profaning of the Sacrament  
 of Christ’s Body and Blood, nor yet the falling  
 into great Sins through Temptation ; all which  
 may be timely and truly repented of and pardon-  
 ed ; but an utter renouncing Christ’s Religion, a  
 casting him off, and maliciously reproaching Christ,  
 and relapsing into Judaism or Heathenism : For  
 the Apostle is warning the converted *Jews* from  
 falling off again to their former *Jewish* Religion ;  
 and those who should thus become Apostates, he  
 says, *fall away*, and, as it were *crucify the Son of*  
*God afresh* ; nay, *have trodden under foot the Son*  
 of

(a) *Contra Faustum Manichæum*, l. 20. c. 21.

(b) *Chap. vi. 4. &c.* and *Chap. x. 26, &c.*



of God; and there is no other besides who can relieve them: So that this dreadful Passage ought not to drive other Sinners into Despair, who do not finally fall away from the Christian Faith and Hope, but repent and reform. This is evident from the Place itself, because it is not declared to be *impossible* to renew, or recover such, because God would not accept their Repentance; but because the Persons here described by the Apostle, are supposed not to be *renewed to repentance*.

5thly, That no one can have such Grounds of Comfort in Trouble, as a good Christian; for his Troubles and Sufferings make him so much the more like unto God's Servants, as being the Afflictions of the People of God; and even to Jesus Christ himself, who will reward all his Followers, and crown their Faith and Patience with eternal Joy and Glory: And in the mean time, such a Servant of Christ can comfort himself, that God is his Father, and will deal with him accordingly, and order all for his everlasting Good (c).

*Thus much for the Epistles of St. Paul.*

### *Design of the General Epistle of St. James.*

THIS Saint, as the Antients affirm (d), was one of the twelve Apostles, and was called *the brother of our Lord* (e), either because he was (as many of the (f) Antients write) the Son of *Joseph* by a former Wife, or because near related to the Virgin *Mary*; for the *Jews* called Relations

(c) *Chap. xi. and xii.*

(d) *Cave of St. James the Less.*

(e) *Mat. xiii. 55. Gal. i. 19.*

(f) *Ibid. and Bishop Pearson on the Creed, Artic. 3.*

tions *Brethren*. He is also called *James the Less*, to distinguish him from the other *James*, whom *Herod* beheaded. After our Lord's Ascension into Heaven, he was Bishop of *Jerusalem* (f). This holy Man was not content to take care of the Christians only in and about *Jerusalem*, but also sent this Epistle to the *twelve Tribes scattered abroad*, or that were dispersed into other Parts; and therefore it is called a *General Epistle*, the Copies thereof being handed up and down in several Places. Some of the Admonitions in this Epistle seem intended for all the dispersed *Israelites*, or the *twelve Tribes* in general; but the most for those of them who were converted Christians, and who lived intermixed with their Brethren who were not converted. There were also doubtless among the Christian Converts some *Judaizers*, like those (g) who were *zealous for the Law*, of which mention hath been often made before.

Because the true Christians were constantly liable to sundry Troubles and Persecutions, especially from their old Enemies the unbelieving *Jews*; the Apostle, in the Beginning of this Epistle, exhorts them to Patience under all their Troubles; as being *Trials* of the Sincerity of their Faith, and what would be recompensed with a *Crown of Life*. Again, the Christian Religion was in danger to be abused by the loose Doctrines and Practices of some pretended Christians and Hereticks, in particular the Followers (h) of *Simon Magus* (spoken of before on the *Acts*) who wresting St. *Paul's* Doctrine of Justification by Faith only

(f) Euseb. Hist. l. 2. c. 1. Cave, ibid.

(g) *Acts* xxi. 20.

(h) Irenæus, l. 1. c. 20 Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 7. See also the Fifth and Sixth General Remarks on the Epistles.

only (that is, without the Pretence of Merit, or the Works of the Ceremonial Law) pretended that they might do what they list, and encouraged Men to depend on a naked Belief of Christ's Religion, as if *Faith* would save them without Holiness and *good works*.

Against these the Apostle cautions the true Christians, and presses the renouncing of all Impiety and filthy Lusts; and also warns them against a Dependence on a partial Observance only of God's Laws, against despising the Poor, Strife and Envy, covetous Desires, bitter Words, Pride, a Dependence on, and Confidence in this World, forgetting the Uncertainty of this Life, and a hearing the Word without doing it; and on the other hand, exhorts to the Practice of Christian Virtues, such as Kindness, mutual Love, Peaceableness, Humility, &c. and in general, proves, that a bare Faith without Charity, and such other good Works as the Gospel requires, is *dead* and worth nothing: He instances in *Abraham* their Forefather, who was justified not only by his *Faith* in believing God's Promise, but also by his *Works*, which proceeded from that Faith, when he obeyed God in offering his Son *Isaac*; so also *Rahab* was justified, not only by her Faith in believing that the Lord had given the *Israelites* the Land of *Canaan*, but by her Works in preserving the Messengers who were sent to spy it out (i). *The Wars and Fightings* (k) seem more especially to note the Factions, Mutinies, and Uproars among the *Jews* of that Age in general; who

(i) *Job*. ii. For reconciling this with St. Paul's Justification by Faith only, in his Epistle to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, see the *First, Fifth, and Sixth General Remarks* on the Epistles.

(k) *Chap.* iv. 1.



who pretending to be a free People, could not easily bear Subjection under the *Romans*, or any others: Such Mutinyings occasioned many Massacres among them, as *Josephus* shews (*l*); and most likely, some who called themselves Christians, were carried away with the common Prejudices of that People in general, and might too much countenance the Tumults so frequent among the whole Body of the *Jews*.

In the Beginning of the Fifth Chapter, the Apostle seems to tax the unbelieving *Jews*, for their covetous Hoarding, Oppressions, and Persecution of the Christians; and to threaten them with Christ's speedy coming to execute Judgment on them, when they should be miserably slaughtered, and spoiled of all their Treasures, as it came to pass not long afterwards; and thence he encouraged the true Christians to be patient, and to wait for Deliverance; and by the way, charged them to avoid an evil Custom got among the *Jews*, of swearing by Heaven and Earth, &c. in their ordinary Communications.

Lastly (*m*), he instructs them what to do in the midst of the various Accidents of this Life; if they are *afflicted*, to pray; if *merry* or prosperous, to praise God; if *sick*, to send for *the Elders*, the Bishops or Presbyters of the Church, that they might have the Benefit both of their Prayers, for the Forgiveness of their Sins, and also of the anointing with oil in the name of the Lord Jesus; which being added to the Prayer, would, by an extraordinary Gift in those Primitive Times, miraculously heal Diseases (*n*). Sick Persons were

X

also

(*l*) Wars, Book 2. Chap. 19, 20.

(*m*) Chap. v. 13. to the End.

(*n*) Mark vii. 13.

also to *confess their faults one to another*, or acknowledge their Sins, which might occasion their Sickness, in order to procure Prayers, that such Sins might *be forgiven them*, and they might be healed. It is not here expressly mentioned (o), whether this *Confession of faults one to another* (p) is to be understood to be made to the *Elders of the Church*, whom they were to send for (q), the Words *one to another* being sometimes limited according to the preceding Matter, as (r) *Submitting one to another*, is meant of Inferiors or Superiors, as in the following Instance of Wives to their Husbands (s); and thus (t), *Use hospitality one to another*, can be meant only of the Rich to their Equals and the Poor; or, whether the Sick was to confess his Sins to any Christian Brethren, who should visit him in the Presence of the Elder, to procure their Prayers for the Pardon of such Sins, and the restoring him to Health; but the constant Practice of the Antients, and the Connexion of this Passage (u), with the foregoing (x), inclines us to understand (y) the Confession to be made to the *Elders of the Church*, who were to be sent for, and to *pray over* the Sick (z), not in the *Romanist's* Sense, either in respect to their Sacrament of Penance, or extream Unction; but that the visiting Pastor, as a spiritual Physician, might be informed of the State of his sick Penitent, and accordingly know how to apply to him, pray for him, and comfort him by ministerial Absolution;

III

(.) See Dr. Hammond on the Place, and Dr. Comber on the Office of the Visitation of the Sick, § 2. Rubr. 5.

(p) Ver. 16.

(q) Ver. 14.

(r) Eph. v. 21.

(s) Ver. 22.

(t) 1 Pet. iv. 9.

(u) Ver. 16.

(x) Ver. 14, 15.

(y) Dr. Wells.

(z) Ver. 14.

in which Sense the Words have been thus paraphrased, *Confess your Faults one to another*, that is, the Sick to the Ministers of the Church; *and pray for one another*, that is, the Minister for the Sick (a).

The Apostle concludes with Encouragement to all those who (on such Occasion of Sicknefs, or any other) shall be instrumental to the Conversion of a Sinner.

*Observations on the Epistle of St. James.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**H A T this Apostle fully and evidently declares the Will of God to be this: That all who believe in Christ, live holy Lives, and carefully perform good Works; otherwise their Faith and Profession are utterly vain (b).

2<sup>dly</sup>, That since our Lives are so uncertain, it is a very unaccountable Thing to be always hoarding up for this World (c).

3<sup>dly</sup>, That oppressing the Poor, and unjust Exaction, is an *heaping up* to ourselves an heavier Damnation (d).

4<sup>thly</sup>, That the Papists *Extream Unction*, where-with they anoint dying Persons, in order to the Salvation of their Souls, hath no Foundation in the Primitive Practice of *anointing the Sick with Oil* (e); for this was in order to the *saving the Sick* from Death, and *raising him up*, and the having those *Sins forgiven*, which had provoked God to inflict a bodily Disease upon him: And so for the Recovery, and miraculous *healing* of the sick

X 2

Person;

(a) Ibid.

(b) Chap. ii.

(c) Chap. iv. 13, 14.

(d) Chap. v, from Ver. 1, to 6.

(e) Mentioned Chap. v. 14, 15.



Person; which Gift hath long since ceased: Whereas the *Romish* Church appoint Anointing, when they suppose the Sick past Recovery, in order to his Salvation in the next World, without Appointment or Promise in the Holy Scriptures.

*Design of the Two Epistles General of St. Peter.*

**T**HE first Epistle was written by St. *Peter*, one of the Twelve Apostles, to the Christians dispersed up and down in several Countries of the *Lesser Asia* (f); for which Cause, this Epistle also, and the next, are called *General*, like that of St. *James*. The Christian *Strangers* herein mentioned, no doubt, were most of them converted *Jews*; for there were many scattered or dispersed *Jews* in several Countries; but that there were converted *Gentiles* or *Proselytes* among them, as in the other Churches at *Rome*, *Corinth*, &c. seems probable, from their being in *Times past not a People* (g), and from their having wrought the *Will of the Gentiles* formerly, by *Lasciviousness and abominable Idolatries* (h): For of all Sins, the whole Body of the *Jews* were careful to avoid Idolatry (i), ever since their Return from the *Babylonish* Captivity.

The Apostle, in the first Place, endeavours to prevent their Apostacy from the Christian Religion; which they were in Danger of, by reason of their

(f) Chap. i. 1, 2.

(g) Chap. ii. 10.

(h) Chap. iv. 3.

(i) Dr. Wells thinks they were only *Jews*, because by them the Scripture understands the Dispersed; and that Idolatries may signify the Covetousness of the *Jews* in getting Money; as St. Paul says, Covetousness is Idolatry.

their Persecutions, and *fiery Trials*: He therefore confirms them in the Faith, which will one Day give them *an Inheritance incorruptible* in Heaven; and comforts them under their present Sufferings and Persecutions, which were for *the Trial of their Faith*, and which ought to be a Matter of rejoicing to them, because tending to secure their *Praise, and Honour, and Glory*, at the appearing of Jesus Christ; and the more to comfort and confirm them, he shews that the Christian Doctrine is no new Thing, but that the Prophets foretold this *Salvation* by Christ, his *Sufferings* and *Glory*; and that they lose no Privileges by believing in Christ, but rather obtain greater; which he expresses in the *Jewish* Phrases (*k*), of being a *Royal Priesthood, an Holy Nation, a Peculiar People*. These, he says, were now the Christian Privileges, however the unbelieving *Jews* claimed them for themselves.

The Apostle also directs them in an Holy Conversation; that to this Purpose they carefully abstain from all Sin and Lusts, that might be a Scandal among the Heathen, and discharge the several Duties which Christianity requires; such as Love and Kindness, Constancy in Prayer, Charity and Hospitality, Humility, Trust in God, and Watchfulness against their Adversary the Devil's Temptations; and also in respect to their particular Relations, whether as Subjects, Servants, Husbands, Wives, Bishops and Presbyters of the Church, called Elders, and those committed to their Charge; that all be careful to behave themselves as the Christian Doctrine requires. The particular Reason of the Exhortation to Submission to *Governors, &c.*

X 3

at

(*k*) *Chap. ii. 9.* like that of *Exod. xix. 6.*

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at that Time (*a*), might be to preserve them from being concerned in the *Jewish* Wars, or bearing any Part in that Rebellion against *Cæsar*, or the *Roman* Emperor and his Officers, which was then breaking out among the *Jews*.

That difficult Passage (*b*), *by which* (Spirit) *also* *he went and preached unto the spirits in prison*; *which some time were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, &c.* is thus explained; viz. that Christ by his Spirit preached to those before the Flood, by the Ministry of *Noah*; they may be said to be *in Prison*, either because in Bondage or Captivity under Sin (*c*), or, because, for their Disobedience to the Spirit of Christ, waiting and preaching to them by *Noah*, they were all drowned, and their Spirits are *reserved* (as it were in Prison) expecting *the Judgment* of the great Day (*d*).

The Apostle mentions one particular Motive to Perseverance in the Christian Religion, and a pious Conversation (*e*), *The end of all things is at hand*; that is, the *Jewish* State was then near to its End, and their Destruction approaching, according to our Saviour's Phrase concerning the same Destruction of the *Jews* (*f*), that *the End* was *not yet* in his Time; but it being near at hand when St. *Peter* wrote this Epistle, they being for the most Part converted *Jews*, should make a proper Use of it, by Piety and Prayer, to secure themselves from being then overwhelmed.

As

(*a*) Chap. ii. 13.

(*b*) Chap. iii. 19, 20.

(*c*) As *Isa.* xlii. 6, 7. and xlix. 9. *Acts* viii. 23. *in the Bond of Iniquity.*

(*d*) 2 *Pet.* ii. 5, 9.

(*e*) Chap. iv. 7.

(*f*) *Matt.* xxiv. 6.



As to the *Second Epistle General of St. Peter*, it was wrote a little before *St. Peter's Martyrdom*. (e) Herein he confirms the Christians, as in the former Epistle, and exhorts them to continue stedfast in the Christian Faith, and to evidence the Truth of their Perseverance therein, not only by a naked Faith, but an Holy Conversation; not *turning from the Holy Commandment*. He assures them he was a Witness to Christ's *Glory* in the Mount, and heard the *Voice* declaring him to be the Son of God. The Apostle also warns them (f) against Hereticks and *false Teachers*, who were as vicious in their Lives, as deceiving in their Doctrine, giving themselves *Liberty* in all Manner of Vice and Uncleaness, *despising Government*, and by their *cunning devised Fables*, endeavouring to poison others with their damnable Heresies and Impieties; like *Balaam*, who taught *Balak* how to ensnare the *Israelites* in the Commission of Fornication and Idolatry. As for those who derided the Christian's Hope, because Things for the present *continued as they were*, the Apostle shews (g), that Christ's Patience was out of Kindness to reform them; but as the old World was surprized in their Sins, and destroyed by a Flood of Water; so as certainly Christ would come to Judgment, when the World should be destroyed by Fire, and the Ungodly perish; therefore he exhorts to Holiness and Stedfastness in the Faith.

There are two Passages in this Epistle, which have been differently interpreted; the first (b) of God's *casting the Angels which sinned* (that is, the Devils) *down to Hell*, &c. Not that they were

X 4

to

(e) Chap. i. 14.

(f) Chap. ii.

(g) Chap. iii.

(b) Chap. ii. 4.

to be in Hell Torments before the Day of Judgment, for they are represented in Scripture to have their Mansions in the Air, and about the Earth; where they tempt and seduce, and do all the Mischief they can to Mankind: Hence their Chief, Satan, is stiled *the Prince of the Air* (i), and the Devils cried out to Christ (k), *Art thou come to torment us before our Time?* So that, the *Casting them down to Hell*, as also in *Jude* (l), *reserving them in everlasting Chains*, seems to import only, as the Original will bear, and according to the Antients, that God had *adjudged* them to hellish Torments; and so *delivered them to be reserved* in the Air for *Chains of Darknes* at the Day of Judgment (m). *The Lord knoweth how to reserve the Unjust unto the Day of Judgment, to be punished*; and (n), *To whom the Mist of Darknes is reserved for ever*; as a condemned Criminal is reserved in a Dungeon till his Execution (o).

As for the other Passage (p), of the World's being *reserved unto Fire, against the Day of Judgment, to be burnt up*; some understand the Apostle speaking here, not of the End of the World, but of the Coming of Christ to Judgment on the *Jews*, which was then just approaching; and that in figurative Expressions, which the *Jews* understood in the Language of the Prophet *Joel* (q), by the Representation of Blood and Fire, and the Dissolution of the Heaven and the Earth; thereby denoting the utter Destruction, of which this Apostle

(i) *Eph.* ii. 2.(k) *Matt.* viii. 29.(l) *Ver.* 6.(m) Like as *Ver.* 9.(n) *Ver.* 17.

(o) Ταπταρ signifies any Place below, or where there is Trouble, which the Region of the Air is, in resp. to Heaven. Grotius and Dr. Wells in loc. Mede, Book 1. Disc. 4.

(p) *Chap.* i. 7, to 13.(q) *Chap.* ii. 30.

apostle gave a short Hint in the first Epistle (r), *The end of all things is at hand*; that is, the Jewish Temple, their City and State, will shortly be at an End, as it came to pass. But since the Apostle (s) speaks of the Destruction of the Old World by *Water*, in a literal Sense; in like manner he seems to speak of the Destruction of the *Heavens*, or Elements, and *the Earth* by *Fire* in a literal Sense too.

*Observations on the First and Second Epistles of St. Peter.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**H A T a good Christian may not only be patient, but joyful under Sufferings and Troubles; which make him so like Christ here, and entitle him to the Possession of eternal Joy with him hereafter (t).

2<sup>dly</sup>, That it is the *Will of God*, that all Christians make Conscience of Obedience and Subjection to the Supreme Powers (under whom they live) and to the Magistrates appointed by them; as the first Christians were enjoined to be *subject to the King as supreme, or unto Governors, as unto them who are sent by him* (that is, to the Emperors, and their Deputies the Proconsuls, &c (u). and were taught, not to be of that rebellious, turbulent, and seditious Temper, as the *Jews* were (under Pretence of being a free People, and subject only to God) *using their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness*. This Doctrine of the Apostle is the same with that of his Master; for Christ taught his Disciples, that his *kingdom was not of this world*; but that he left their Temporal or Civil Matters

(r) Chap. iv. 7.

(s) Chap. iii. 6.

(t) 1 Pet. i. 6, to 10.

(u) 1 Pet. ii. 13, &c.



Matters in the same State he found them, commanding, to *render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's*, to be obedient unto their Civil Governors.

3dly, That when God delays the punishing of Sin at present, it is in order to the Sinner's Conversion; and if that be not the Effect, the Judgment will prove the more severe (u).

*Design of the Three Epistles General of  
St. John.*

**T**HIS *John* was one of the Twelve Apostles, and the Author of the Gospel of *St. John*. (x) His first Epistle was designed to instruct, comfort, and encourage the Primitive Christians, and more particularly the *Jewish* Converts; that their *joy might be full*, in relying on the Son of God; for he is *faithful and just*, to make good his Word and Promise to forgive us, forasmuch as he is *the Propitiation for our Sins*, if we believe in him, and for the future *keep his Commandments*.

The Christians of that Age were in danger of being seduced by some Deceivers, the Spawn of *Simon Magus*: He himself, and some of his Party, *denied that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah*, or *Christ* (y). Some of the Hereticks denied the human Nature (z) of Christ, or *that Christ was come in the Flesh* (a). They pretended that Christ did  
*seem*

(u) 2 *Pet.* iii. 8, 9, 10.

(x) *Dr. Mill's Prolegom.* p. 17.

(y) *Iren.* l. i. c. 20. Docuit semetipsum esse, qui inter Judæos quidem quasi filius apparebat. *Chap.* ii. 22.

(z) *Cerinthus, Marcion, &c.* de his *Ignatius ad Smyrn.* §. 1, 2, 3, & *ad Trall.* §. 9, 10. *Iren.* l. i. c. 25. *Tertul.* de *Carne Christi*, §. 1. *Chap.* iv. 2, 3.

*seem* to be a Man, and to die ; but was not so in Reality, but in Appearance only (*b*). Another Sort of heretical Deceivers were contrary to the former, who denied the *Divine* Nature of Christ, pretending that he was only bare Man (*c*), not the Son of God, and *believed not the record that God gave of his Son, who is the true God* (*d*), and *eternal Life* (or the Author of eternal Life, as he is here described to be) (*e*). Against such St. *John* wrote some Part of his Gospel ; and now in this Epistle assures the true Christians, that he was one of those who had *heard* and *seen* the Lord Jesus, *the Word of Life* (by whom is revealed to us the Gospel of Life and Salvation) and conversed with him, being a Witness both of his real Manhood, and of the miraculous Power whereby he was evidenced to be *the Son of God*, and *the true God* ; and that the Deceivers before-mentioned, and all their Followers were *Antichrists* (Opposers of Christ). St. *John* earnestly warns the Christians to beware of all such ; and tells them, that the *Unction*, or anointing which they *had received*, i. e. the miraculous Effusion of the Holy Ghost upon them, was sufficient to convince them of, and teach them the Truth.

Again, Some of these Deceivers, the Followers of *Simon Magus*, pretended, that a bare Faith would save without Holiness (*f*), and allowed them-

(*b*) Iren. l. 1. c. 20. Homo appareret esse, cum non esset Homo : Which Simon applies to himself, as being the Son, and Christ.

(*c*) Ebion, &c. Iren. l. 1. c. 26. and Not. Grabij.

(*d*) See Glassius Philolog. Sac. l. 3. Tract. 2, de Pron. Relativo. Can. 10. and Dr. Whitby in loc.

(*e*) Chap. v. 5, 10, 11, 12, 20.

(*f*) Simoniani & Valentiniani. Iren. l. 1. c. 20. ut liberos agere quæ velint: secundum enim ipsius gratiam salvari homines, non secundum operas justas, & Iren. l. 1. c. 1. §. 12. & Grabij Not. ibidem.

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themselves in many foul Sins ; therefore the Apostle cautions the Church against them ; for every one who rightly *hopes* in Christ, *purifieth himself* ; and *whosoever is born of God*, or formed into a new Nature, and endued with his Spirit, *doth not commit sin* ; that is, doth not go on in any way of Sin ; *for his Seed*, the Holy Spirit, *remaineth in him* ; and, in a manner, *he cannot commit sin*, *because he is born of God* (g), being become a *new Creature*, and thereby having, as it were, a new Nature ; his Mind, and Temper, and Inclinations being quite changed from what they were ; so that to commit wilful Sin, is now contrary to the Genius and Temper of his Soul, to his Inclination and Disposition (as we say of a generous Man, that he cannot do a base Action) and it is become the Bent of his very Nature to please God, and to be careful not to offend him by Sin : But *he that committeth sin*, who lives in the Practice of any wilful Sin, *is of the Devil* (h). So that all true Christians are to be careful that *no man deceive* them in this Matter, but that they abandon and avoid all evil Courses ; and also shew their *Love* to the Lord Jesus (who so much loved us) by keeping his Commandments ; especially maintaining true cordial *Love one towards another*, which is the peculiar Duty of a Christian (i), on the Performance of which St. *John* much insists ; forasmuch as, except those Instances of Piety which directly have respect to God, or belong only to ourselves, the rest are in a manner included in Love to our Neighbour ; which so influences our Behaviour, that it be consistent with Justice, Charity, and all the Duties we are to perform to Parents, Superiors, Equals, and Inferiors,

*Lastly,*

(g) 1 *John* iii. 3, 9.

(h) *Ver.* 8.

(i) *Chap.* iv. 7, 8, 9.



Lastly, He concludes as he began, with confirming them in the Faith of the Son of God, who hath the Gift of eternal Life, and will hear and grant their Supplications.

In this Epistle, St. *John* gives us an illustrious Proof of the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity* (k): *There are Three that bear Record* (or Witness) *in Heaven; the Father, the Word* (or Son) *and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One.* Which Words are omitted in some ancient Copies, probably because in the Original the same Words, which we translate *there are Three that bear Record*, or Witness, *Ver. 7.* are repeated, *Ver. 8.* Some careless Transcriber (possibly in the earlier Ages of Christianity, after whom others copied) having wrote, *There are Three that bear record*, *Ver. 7.* happened to leave out the remaining Part of the seventh Verse, and so far of the Beginning of the eighth Verse, till he came to look upon the same Words in the eighth Verse, *There are Three that bear record*, or *witness* (for it is the same Word in the original *Greek*, which is translated *Record* in the 7th Verse, and *Witness* in the eighth Verse). The two Verses are thus, *Ver. 7. For there are Three that bear record [in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these Three are One, Ver. 8. And there are Three that bear record] in earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the Blood; and these Three agree in One.* Where we see, how easily the Transcriber (whose Livelihood was gotten by transcribing Books, before the Invention of Printing, and therefore who may well be presumed to write fast) might omit all those Words of the 7th Verse, and Part of the 8th Verse, which are between

(k) Chap. v. 7..

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(k) Chap. v. 7..



tween the Crotchets, as above, by looking on the same Words of the 8th Verse, which he had just before wrote down out of the 7th Verse, *viz.* *There are Three that bear record*, and so go on to, *in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood*, Ver. 8. instead of, *in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost*, Ver. 7. And I rather mention this Conjecture of Dr. Mill, because I observed the like Mistake and Omission of the Transcriber of these, my own Papers, on the like Occasion, of some Words being repeated near together (l).

But however this was, it is certain that these Words of the 7th Verse are quoted in Substance by *Tertullian* (m), (in whose Time the very authentick Epistles of the Apostles were extant) (n) and also twice by *Cyprian* (o), who are of much greater Antiquity than the Copies wherein they are omitted, and who lived before *Arius*; and therefore it cannot be pretended they framed them to serve the *Trinitarian* Cause: But on the other hand it appears from them, that in their Time (about the Close of the second Century, and the Beginning of the third) those Words were found in St. *John*'s Epistle. And indeed without them the Argument of St. *John* seems very imperfect; for, as, Ver. 9. *the Witness of Men* refers to the *Witness in Earth*, mentioned Ver. 8. so the *Witness of God* refers to the *Record*, or *Witness in Heaven*, mentioned Verse 7 (p).

What

(l) For a farther Proof of such a Mistake of Transcribers, see Calaubon Exercitat. 15. An. 33. Num. 37. p. 392.

(m) Advers. Praxeam, c. 25.

(n) Præscript. c. 36.

(o) De Unitate Ecclesiæ & Epist. ad Jubaianum. Vid. Dr. Mill ad finem Epist. i. Joh. p. 742.

(p) Compare Dr. Wells in loc. with Dr. Mill ibid.

What the *Sin unto Death* is (*q*), the Remission of which the Apostle doth *not say* that the first Christians should pray for, he hath not particularly mentioned. In the ancient Church, a deliberate Commission of the heinous Sins of Idolatry, Murder, and Adultery, debarred the Sinners from the Communion of the Church: Perhaps the Apostle intended the obstinate and incorrigible (*r*) Offenders in such Kinds, who, after Admonition, still persisted, and refused to submit to the Discipline of the Church; there being no Hopes of Cure of that sick Soul, who refused to submit to a proper Physician appointed by God: So we call a Disease particularly mortal, or *unto Death*, when there is no Hopes of Recovery. Others believe (*s*) the *Sin unto Death* to be a total Apostacy from the Christian Faith, joined with a malicious blaspheming of the Spirit of God (as the *Sin against the Holy Ghost* (*t*), which Christ says *shall not be forgiven*). For too many of the *Jews*, at that Time, relapsed to *Judaism*, renouncing Christ, and blaspheming the Holy Spirit, which so miraculously testified of him; whom St. Paul says, *It is impossible to renew again to repentance* (*u*). So that those are guilty of the Sin unto Death, who are either obstinate Apostates, or continue hardened, incorrigible Sinners, in other respects.

In the Second Epistle of St. John, he styles himself the *Elder*, partly because he was then (*x*) above ninety Years of Age, and also because he presided over all the Churches of the *Lesser Asia*. This Epistle was wrote to a *Lady* of Quality, and  
to

(*q*) Chap. v. 16.

(*r*) Grotius in loc.

(*s*) Beza in loc.

(*t*) In Matt. xii. 31.

(*u*) Heb. vi. 4, &c.

(*x*) Dr. Mill's Prolegom. p. 12.

to her Family, who had embraced the Christian Faith, and whose *Sister*, with her *Children*, were known to the Apostle (x); much to the same Purpose as the former, to testify and confirm them in the true Faith, and in the true Practice of Charity and Christian Love, and warning them to beware of the Deceivers mentioned in the other Epistle, who *denied that Jesus Christ was come in the flesh*.

*The Third Epistle of St. John* was wrote to one *Gaius* a Christian, who was a kind Friend and courteous Entertainer of the distressed *Brethren*, or Christians who were Strangers, especially those who *went forth* to publish the Gospel among the *Gentiles*, and would *take nothing of them* (y), and therefore were recommended by the Apostle to wealthy and charitable Christians (z). The Apostle encourages him in the true Faith, and to continue that Hospitality and Charity: And as for *Diotrephes*, who *loved to have the Preeminence* himself, and would not submit to the Apostle, nor receive or entertain the *Brethren* recommended to him, nor yet suffer others to do it; the Apostle threatens to deal with him accordingly; *or remember his Deeds* (not so much for the Opposition he made to his Person, as to the Progress of the Gospel). But as for *Gaius*, he had no more to say to him, but that he hoped shortly to see him.

*Observations*

(x) Ver. 13.

(z) Ver. 6.

(y) Ver. 7.



*Observations on the Epistles of St. John.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**H A T it was a signal Instance of God's Providence and Care for the Church, to preserve St. *John* the Apostle alive so long; viz. till the Emperor *Trajan's* Time (a), above three-score Years after Christ's Ascension into Heaven. So that he who was one of those who saw the Lord Jesus, and was a Witness to all that was done, might give an early Check to those Deceivers above-mentioned, and also might satisfy and confirm the first Christians (b).

2<sup>dly</sup>, That those Sectaries, who deny the Necessity of a ministerial Teaching, on Pretence that *the Anointing* (or the Gifts of the Holy Ghost) is sufficient to teach them, because the Apostle told the Primitive Christians, *the anointing which ye have received, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you* (c), is a gross Error: For that Unction was miraculous, and as such is now ceased; unless they can shew such immediate extraordinary Effects of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, in Knowledge and speaking Languages, and healing Diseases, &c. as God vouchsafed to those Primitive Christians.

3<sup>dly</sup>. That unfeigned Love, Friendship, and Kindness one towards another, is the peculiar Badge of the Christian Religion (d).

4<sup>thly</sup>, This Apostle instructs us, how we may examine ourselves before-hand, and judge what

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our

(a) Martyrolog. Rom. Dec. 27. Euseb. Hist. 1. 3. c. 23.

(b) 1 *John* i. 1, 2, 3.

(c) 1 *John* ii. 27.

(d) 1 *John* ii. 9, 10, 11. and — iv. 11, to the End. 2 *Epist.* 5. 3 *Epist.* 5, 6.

our Sentence is like to be at the last Day (which certainly is a Matter of great Importance): (e) *If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God; that is, if our Heart, or Conscience, condemn us (either of wilful Omission of Duty, or persisting in Sin, without true Repentance and Reformation) then God will condemn us too; for he knows more of us than our Consciences know, and if we cannot but condemn ourselves, that is a Sign that God will condemn us also; seeing we know by the Scripture Rule, what are the Terms of our Acceptance with him, what we ought not to do, and what we ought to have done: But if our Conscience condemn us not, but that we have abstained from such and such Sins, and performed such Duties, or have timely and truly repented and reformed, and become new Creatures, then have we confidence towards God; great Hopes in God's Mercy, that he will not condemn us, but accept our sincere Endeavours, hear our Prayers, and save our Souls.*

*Design of the General Epistle of St. Jude.*

**T**HIS *Jude* was one of the twelve Apostles, called *Lebbæus* and *Thaddæus* (f), and was Brother to *James*, who wrote the Epistle of *St. James*, and so, as is supposed, one of *Joseph's* Sons by a former (g) Wife, or else nearly related to the *Virgin Mary*. This *St. Jude* wrote this Epistle to some of the first Christians, especially to the *Jews* who were converted to the Christian Faith,

(e) 1 *John* iii. 20, 21.

(f) *Matt.* x. 3.

(g) See what is said of *St. James*.

Faith, and dispersed up and down in several Countries ; therefore it is also called a Catholick or *General Epistle* (as were those of his Brother *James* and *St. Peter*). The Design was to encourage them to persevere in their holy Faith, and to caution them against the Deceivers and Hereticks, who had crept in amongst them, on purpose to destroy the true Faith, and were Persons of corrupt and leud Conversations. The Apostle (much in the same Manner as *St. Peter* had done in his second Epistle) briefly describes their wretched Doctrines and Practices, and declares the terrible Judgments which would overtake them, *who were before of old ordained to this Condemnation (b)* ; that is, not made and ordained by God, on purpose to be punished ; but as the Original strictly (*i*) imports, of whom it was before written or prophesied, that this should be their Condemnation without Repentance, as *Enoch* prophesied of them (*k*).

The History of *Michael*, and the Prophecy of *Enoch (l)*, being owned by the *Jews*, tho' not in Scripture, the Apostle argues with them from their own Authors and Concessions.

*Observations on the Epistle of St. Jude.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**H A T great Care is to be taken to avoid Deceivers ; who many Times (whatever they pretend) are very ill Persons, and study their own Advantage (*m*).

Y 2

2<sup>dly</sup>, That

(*b*) Ver. 4.

(*i*) Προγεγραμμένος.

(*k*) Ver. 14.

(*l*) Ver. 9, 14.

(*m*) Ver. 4, 11, 12, 16.



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2dly, That it is a Character of the worst of Hereticks, to *despise Dominions*, and *speak evil of Dignities* (n).

### *Design of the Revelation of St. John the Divine.*

**T**HIS St. *John* was one of the twelve Apostles, and the (o) same who wrote the Gospel, and the three Epistles of St. *John*. He was called *the Divine* (as is justly conceived) by reason of his Writings, especially the Gospel, which sets forth the Divine Nature of Christ, or, as he is God; whereas the other Gospels begin the Account of him, as he was Man, and born in the World. This Book was written by him in the Isle of *Patmos*, whither he was banished (p).

The first three Chapters contain the Messages which God, in a Vision, commanded St. *John* to send to the Seven Churches of *Asia*, represented by *Golden Candlesticks*, and to the particular Bishops of each Church, represented by *Stars*, and called *Angels*, probably in Allusion to the *Jewish Church*, the Priests whereof were stiled *Angels*, or *Messengers* (q), as bringing the Commands of God to the People, and carrying, or offering their Prayers to God; or else, from the Ruler of the Synagogue, whose Office was to order the Prayers and Reading in the Synagogue, and was called *Angel*, or *Bishop* (r).

These

(n) *Ver.* 8.

(o) Just. Martyr & Irenæus apud Dr. Mill Prolegom. p. 19.

(p) *Chap.* i. 9. (q) *Mal.* ii. 7.

(r) Lightfoot Hor. in Matt. iv. 23. *The Sheliach Zibbor: Compare Dean Prideaux Connect. Part I. Book VI. sub An. 445. concerning the Ministration of the Synagogue Service, Numb. 4.*

These Seven Churches were at *Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamus, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea*; all which were eminent Cities in the *Lesser Asia*. The Design of these Messages was, to acquaint them with the Notice God took of the Behaviour of every one of them, to encourage them in what was good, and reprove them for what was amiss, to caution them against false Teachers and Seducers, and to comfort them in their Sufferings, lest they should, through Fear, cast off their holy Profession; assuring them that God would not fail to reward and crown all those who persevered in his holy Faith and Service, with eternal Glory.

(b) God is said to *hate the Deeds of the Nicolaitans*; who allowed themselves to commit Adultery or Fornication, on Pretence of Encouragement from *Nicolaus* the Deacon; who being suspected of Jealousy, to manifest the contrary, is said to give Allowance to his Wife (not to be an Adulteress, but) to marry whom she would (c), although he himself was freed from any leud Practices.

The other Part of the *Revelation* contains several Prophecies concerning the State and Condition of the Christian Church from the Beginning, and the Rage of the Devil and his Instruments against it; concerning the Sufferings and Martyrdom of many; the Ruin and Destruction of all their Enemies; and at last, the glorious Triumphs and Joys of all the holy Members of Christ's Church. For a more particular Account of this Book,

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the

(b) *In Chap. ii. 6.*

(c) *Euseb. Hist. l. 3. c. 29. Gr. 23. γῆμαι τῇ βυλομένην. Vid. & Grotius in loc.*

the Reader may consult Dr. *Wells's* Paraphrase thereon.

*Observations on the Revelations.*

1<sup>st</sup>, **T**HAT God curiously observes, and takes notice how all the Members of his Church behave themselves, whether well or ill ; and as he will be sure to punish the Bad according to their Works, so he will not fail to reward all that persevere in his Service (*d*).

2<sup>dly</sup>, We have an Instance of Episcopal Government, in the Messages sent from Christ by St. *John* to the Angels or Bishops of the Churches of *Asia* (*e*). Which the more carefully and impartially any one reads, the more he will be convinced of the primitive Government of the Church by Bishops. St. *John* directs his Speech to *one* as superior to the rest, and makes him accountable for the Faults of the whole Flock ; which most likely he would not have done, if other Presbyters had been equally appointed over them. To this Purpose it is farther to be considered, that the most early Accounts of the Primitive Church assure us (*f*), that Bishops were settled in all those Churches, at or near the Time when the Epistles in the *Revelations* were sent to them ; particularly *Onesimus* (*g*) at *Ephesus*, *Melito* (*h*) at *Sardis*, and *Polycarp* (*i*) at *Smyrna*. Now St. *John* lived, as hath been observed, above threescore Years after Christ's Ascension ; by which time the Church was  
in

(*d*) Chap. ii, iii.      (*e*) Chap. i, and ii.

(*f*) Bishop Potter's *Government of the antient Church*, Chap. 4.

(*g*) Ignatius Epist. ad Ephes.

(*h*) Euseb. Hist. l. 4. c. 26.

(*i*) Ignatius Epist. ad Polycarp. & Iren. l. 3. c. 3.



in a more settled State, as to its Government, than it was before. It hath been objected, that the Apostle mentions more than one single Person, *some of you* (k). But the Answer is easy, that although this Epistle is directed to the *Angel* or Bishop of *Smyrna*, yet it appears, that the Particulars therein contained related not only to his single Person, but to all the Members of the Church over which he presided ; and that is the Reason of the Expression in the plural Number : And the like is to be understood in reference to the other Epistles.

And as for the Universal Christian Church next to the Apostolical Age, the most antient Accounts thereof give full Evidence of this Government, and more clearly explain, illustrate, and confirm what is mentioned concerning the same in the holy Scriptures : Which the Reader may be thoroughly satisfied in, by consulting the Authors cited in the Notes (l) ; and at the same time may remember, that every Law or Institution is best explained by the immediate subsequent Practice thereupon ; and that the Primitive Christians had the best Opportunity of knowing the Minds of the Apostles : Nor is it credible, at so great a Distance of the Christian Churches, from *East* to *West*, that this Constitution should be so early, and universally received and submitted to, if it had not been established by the Apostles, or the first Founders of those Churches : Nor lastly, can it be conceived that any of those who were always ready to suffer Death in Defence of the Doctrines and Ordinances of Christ, would permit any Change to be made in his Institutions, in so important an Affair as the

Y 4

Govern-

(k) *Chap. ii. 10. and in other Places.*

(l) *Bishop Potter* *ibid.* *Bishop Beveridge's Codex Can. Eccles. Prim. l. 2. c. 11.*

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Government of the Church. It is no proper Reply to this Argument, that we do not submit to the Judgment of the antient Fathers in all Points of *Doctrines*, nor to all their *Practices*; in which however they might be mistaken, yet their Testimony in *plain Matters of Fact* is not to be the less regarded.

3dly, All these Seven once famous Cities (*m*), are in the Hands of the *Turks*, by whom the Christian Churches there are (*n*) almost utterly ruined; and the few Christians who live there are reduced to the most deplorable Servitude, there being very few Christian Families in *Pergamus*, and but one Church, to which a Priest is sent from *Smyrna* to officiate: Not so much as one Church in *Thyatira*, nor in *Sardis*: In *Philadelphia* there are four, and a considerable Number of Christians, but oppressed and enslaved by the *Turks*: *Laodicea* is not at all inhabited: *Ephesus* is only a poor Village, and in it are the Ruins of their antient magnificent Churches: *Smyrna* hath two Churches belonging to the *Grecian* Christians, and one to the *Armenians*, and a larger Number of Christians live there than in the rest, but under the heavy Yoke of barbarous *Turks*. Oh! how should we walk worthy of our Christian Privileges, lest the Case be ours also: (*o*) *I will come unto thee quickly, and remove thy candlestick out of his place.*

4thly, That nothing can befall the Church but what God foresees and knows, and is pleased to permit; as is evident from this Revelation beforehand to St. *John* of what should afterwards come to pass.

Lastly,

(*m*) *Mentioned Chap. ii. 3.*

(*n*) *Dr. Smith Septem Asiæ Ecclesiarum Notitia.*

(*o*) *Chap. ii. 5.*

Lastly, although the Meaning of many of the Prophecies contained in this Book may not be clearly understood now, yet hereafter the Christians may know them; and, especially by the Event, adore the Wisdom and Providence of God. In the mean time, we may receive great Edification from several Parts of it: Such as those noble Hymns offered up to God and Christ (*p*): The Precepts for Adoration of one Supreme God, in Opposition to the worshipping of Idols, or any Creature (*q*): The Comfort of relying on Christ's Merits (*r*): Lastly, The Encouragement to a patient Continuance in the Faith, and a holy Life, notwithstanding any present Sufferings (*s*).

*The CONCLUSION.*

**T**HUS we have gone through the particular Books of the Old and New Testament, and observed the chief Designs and Intentions of them. And now to conclude; Let us consider seriously, and lay it to heart, that by hearing and reading what is contained in the Holy Bible, *viz.* the glorious Privileges which belong to pious Persons, of being the Children of God, and Heirs of Heaven; the Exhortations and Instructions for an holy Life; the gracious Promises to Holiness, and the Threatnings against sinful Lusts, and Impiety; the Consolations in Trouble, and the Christian Arguments of Patience and such like; I say, by hearing and reading these things which are set down in this Holy Book, the same that we now have, the antient Christians

(*p*) Chap. iv. 8, 11. Chap. v. 9, 10, 12, 13.

(*q*) Chap. ix. 20. and xiv. 7. and xxi. 8.

(*r*) Chap. v. 9. and vii. 14. and xii. 11.

(*s*) Chap. ii. 3, 10, 26, and xiv. 12, 13. and xvi. 15.



Christians became so holy and truly religious, so exemplary in their Lives, so diligent in their Duties, so devout and charitable, so free from sinful Pollutions, so patient and joyful in Sufferings, especially when it was for the Cause of Christ and Religion; that it must needs be a great Aggravation of our Unfruitfulness, and our Condemnation must be the heavier, if the same holy Scriptures work not in us a Care to live Godly, to avoid Sins, and chearfully submit to the Divine Will: For the more excellent the Doctrine is, the more noble the Reward propounded; and the more dreadful the Punishment threatened, the more inexcusable will be our Negligence and Disobedience: Whereas, on the other hand, if we so read and meditate upon the Oraçles of God, contained in the Holy Scriptures, as to become still more and more the Servants of God, and nearer to Heaven, how should we praise God for his Goodness and Providence in preserving this Holy Book for our Use; That whereas so many Thousands in the World are ignorant of God and his Word, we should know him and his heavenly Will so far as would make us, here, the holy and lively Members of his Church, and hereafter place us on the right Hand, in order to hear that joyful Invitation, *Come ye blessed children of my Father, inherit the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*

Grant to us, O Lord, in this World, Knowledge of thy Truth; and in the World to come, Life everlasting. *Amen.*



A N

## APPENDIX:

CONTAINING

*Some REMARKS, taken chiefly from Modern Travellers of undoubted Credit, concerning Palestine, where the Jews lived, and other Parts of the Eastern Countries; with the present Customs of the Inhabitants; which illustrate many Passages of the Holy Scriptures;*

I. **T**H E R E are a People in the *Eastern* Countries, who have no settled Abode, but dwell in Tents, and remove with their Families and Beasts for the Convenience of Grass and Water (*a*);  
the

(*a*) *The Arabians are divided into Two Sorts; some of them living in Towns and Villages; others have no fixed settled Habitations, live in Tents, and remove from one Part of the Country to another, according as their Necessities compel, or Conveniencies incite them. Pocock's Specimen Histor. Arabum, p. 2. Compare 2 Maccabees xii. 11, 12. and Justini Histor. Lib. II. non longè ab initio. Thevenor's Travels, Part II. Book II. Ch. 13. Ray's Collection of Travels, Tom. II. Ch. 5. p. 74. Edit. Lond. 1693. Hor. Lib. III. Ode 24. Campestris melius Scythæ—Quorum plaustra vagas ritè trahunt domos—Vivunt; & rigidi Getæ—Immetata quibus jugera liberas—Fruges, & Cere rem ferunt.*

the Country lying open without Inclosures :

“ Their whole Estate (*b*) consists in the numerous Flocks and Herds, which they sell upon  
 “ Occasion, to supply themselves with what they  
 “ want at the Towns they pass by. They are  
 “ courteous to Strangers, kindly entertaining them  
 “ with such Provisions as their Flocks afford, &c.  
 “ After such Manner it was, that *Abraham*, *Isaac*,  
 “ and *Jacob* lived, and pitched their Tents, and  
 “ had Flocks and Cattle, &c. (*c*).

2. There are in the same Countries still to be seen, a Multitude (*d*) of Cells or Sepulchres for Dead Bodies hewn in the firm Rocks ; which are, as it were, Coffins of Stone in Niches, in the Sides of Grotts or Chambers, cut in the Rocks, according to the antient Manner of burying in those Places : Several of these Cells being eight Foot and a half in Length, and three Foot three Inches square. One especially is now to be seen near *Jerusalem*, consisting of several large Rooms with the Coffins of Stone above-mentioned, all cut out of the Rocks, supposed to be the Sepulchre of the Sons of *David* (*e*). Hence we read of burying in Caves, or Sepulchres hewn in the Rocks (*f*).

3. It

(*b*) *Dr. Smith* apud *Ray's Collection of Travels*, Tom. II. Chap. 5. p. 74. Edit. Lond. 1693. *These are some of the better Sort of Arabs ; others of them plunder and rob all they meet with.* *Thevenot Trav.* Part. I. Book II. Ch. 32. *Rauwolf* apud *Ray's Collection of Travels*, Tom. I. Part III. Ch. 2. *Maundrell's Travels*, March 21. p. 56.

(*c*) *Gen.* xii. 8. *and in divers other Places of that Book.*

(*d*) *Maundrell's Travels*, March 5, 8, 28. and May 2. *Sandys's Travels*, l. 3. p. 175. Edit. Lond. 1615.

(*e*) *2 Chron.* xxxii. 33.

(*f*) *Gen* xlix. 29, &c. *John* xi. 38. *Matt.* xxvii. 60.



3. It is usual now in the same Countries to have a Market for Slaves (g), where Men and Women are exposed to Sale unto such as have Occasion for them. So it was antiently : Accordingly we read that *Potiphar* bought *Joseph* of the *Ishmaelites*, to whom his Brethren had sold him (h), and there is Mention made of Servants or Slaves *bought with money* (i). And to this of buying Slaves the Apostle alludes, saying, that we are *bought with a price* (viz. the Blood of the Son of God) and therefore we should duly serve him (k).

4. The Way of travelling for Merchants (l), and others in the *Eastern* Countries is in great Companies, to secure themselves against Robbers, with a vast Number of loaden Camels and Asses, often many hundred together, which they call *Caravans*. So it seems it was in *Jacob's* Time, when he was in the Land of *Canaan* : *His sons lift up their eyes and looked, and behold a company of Ishmaelites* (a Caravan) *came from Gilead with their camels, bearing spicery, and balm, and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt* (m).

5. It is now the Custom in those Parts (not as with us to thresh, but) to *tread* (n) *out their Corn with Oxen*, drawing a square Plank Board studded with Flints. In some Places they only make Oxen or Horses tread out the Corn with their Feet (o).  
So

(g) Ray's *Collection*, Tom. I. Part I. Ch. 8. p. 89. and Part III. Ch. 10. p. 337.

(h) Chap. xxxvii. and xxxix. (i) Gen. xxiii. 27.

(k) 1 Cor. vi. 20, See also Matt. xviii. 25.

(l) Ray *ibid.* Tom. I. Part I. Ch. 10. p. 210. Thevenot Part I. Book I. Ch. 59.

(m) Gen. xxxvii. 25.

(n) Dr. Smith apud Ray, *ibid.* Tom. II. Ch. 5. p. 70. Somewhat like this, Thevenot's Travels, Part I. Book II. Ch. 5. p. 24. (o) Thevenot's Travels, *ibid.*

So the *Israelites* used to do. Hence (p), *Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out (or thresheth) the corn (q). Ephraim is an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn.*

6. Another general Custom of the *Eastern Countries* is to “ send (r) a Present, in order to procure a favourable Reception. It is counted “ uncivil to visit in this Country without an Offering in hand : All great Men expect it, as a “ Tribute due to their Character and Authority ; “ and look upon themselves affronted, and indeed defrauded, when that Compliment is omitted.” And in the *Mogul’s Country*, it is esteemed rather a Mark of Respect on the Suppliant’s Part, than of Avarice of the Officers (s). Thus, of old, *Jacob* ordered his Sons to carry a Present, when they went to *Joseph* as Governor of *Egypt* (t), and (u) again, *There is not a Present to bring the man of God.* And (x), *the children of Belial despised Saul, and brought him no presents.* The wise Men, who came from the *East* to adore Christ as King, brought him a present of gold, frankincense and myrrh (y).

7. The Houses which are now in *Jerusalem*, and many other Parts of the *East*, are built low ; the Top whereof is plain and plaistered, and hath Battlements almost a Yard high, by the Walls surmounting their Roofs : For they cover their Houses

(p) *Deut.* xxv. 4. (q) *Hof.* x. 11.

(r) *Maundrell’s Travels*, March 11. p. 26. *Tavernier’s Relation of Tonquin*, Ch. 1. p. 2.

(s) *Manouchy’s History of the Moguls, near the End*, p. 361. Edit. Lond. 1722.

(t) *Gen.* lxiii. 11, 26. (u) *In 1 Sam.* ix. 7.

(x) *Chap.* x. 27. (y) *Matt.* ii. 11. See also *Gen.* xxxii. 13. *1 Kings* x. 2, 10, 25. *2 Kings* viii. 8.

Houses with a flat Roof or Floor, so that you may walk upon them, and in the Day-time they shelter themselves from the Sun within the Chamber under this plaistered Floor; and after Sun-set they walk, eat, and sleep upon it (a). So it seems the Jews formerly built, and were commanded to make a Battlement for the Roof (b); Rabab hid the Spies upon the roof of her house (c); and David walked upon the roof of his house (d). To which Christ alludes, bidding his Disciples to preach openly upon the house-tops, or in publick (e). And Peter went up upon the house-top to pray (f).

8. The Cedars “grow (g) now amongst the  
“ Snow, near the highest Part of *Lebanon*, and  
“ are remarkable, as well for their own Age and  
“ Largeness, as for those frequent Allusions made  
“ unto them in the Word of God. Here are some  
“ of them very old, and of a prodigious Bulk,  
“ and others younger and of a smaller Size: Of  
“ the former I could only reckon up sixteen, the  
“ latter were very numerous. I measured one of  
“ the largest, and found it twelve Yards and six  
“ Inches in Girt, and yet found, and thirty-seven  
“ Yards in the Spread of its Boughs.” This  
illustrates the Passage where *Solomon* is said to  
discourse of Trees, from the cedar-tree that is in  
*Lebanon*, even to the byssop that springeth out of  
the wall. And (h), *The righteous shall flourish like  
a cedar*

(a) Ray's *Collection*, Tom. I. Part I. Ch. 2. p. 23. and Part III. Ch. 2. p. 283. Moryson's *Itinerary*, Part I. Book III. Ch. 2. Le Bruyn's *Voyage*, Ch. 38, and 65. his *Draught of Jerusalem*, Ch. 53. Sandy's *Travels*, Book II. and III. p. 116, 119, 149.

(b) *Deut.* xxii. 8. (c) *Josh.* ii. 6, 8. (d) *2 Sam.* xi. 2.

(e) *Matt.* x. 27. (f) *Acts* x. 9. See also *1 Sam.* ix. 25. *2 Sam.* xvi. 22. *Matt.* xxiv. 17. *Mark* ii. 4.

(g) Maundrell, *ibid.* May 9. p. 142.

(h) *1 Kings* iv. 33. (i) xcii. 12.



*a cedar in Lebanon. And (a), The boughs thereof were like the goodly cedar-trees; and many other Places in the Holy Scripture.*

9. The *Eastern* People at this Time do not (b) keep their Wine in such Bottles as we do, but in Skins, especially Goat Skins: In like manner they kept Wine (c) anciently. To which our Saviour alludes (d), *Neither do men put new wine into old bottles (or Skins); else the bottles break, by the fermenting Spirits of the new Wine bursting the old Bottles, or Skins.*

10. "Men and Women, Young and Old, in the *Eastern* Countries, use to make (e) a thin Paste of Galls, and calcined Copperas (to beautify themselves, and to keep their Eyes from Rheums). With it they blacken their Lips, and make a Ring round about their Eyes, in the same manner as our Ring-Doves have about their Necks: These Paintings they have had anciently, and some of them they have prepared of *Stibium* or *Antimony*." Of these Paintings of the Eyes we read in several Places (f); *For whom thou didst wash thy self, paintedst thine eyes, &c.* and (g) *Jezebel painted her face; in Hebrew it is, put her eyes in painting: So also (h), Though thou deckest thee with ornaments of gold, though thou rentest thy face, in Hebrew, thine eyes, with painting.*

## 11. The

(a) *Psal.* lxxx. 10.

(b) Ray's *Collection of Travels*, Tom. I. Part I. Ch. 8. p. 94. Maundrell, *ibid.* March 12. *at the End of that Day.*

(c) Homer *Odyss.* apud Ham. in *Matt.* ix. 17.

(d) *Matt.* ix. 17.

(e) Ray *ibid.* Tom. I. Part I. Ch. 6. p. 81.

(f) *Ezek.* xxiii. 40. (g) *2 Kings* ix. 30. (h) *Jer.* iv. 30.

11. The present State of some great Cities, whose Ruin was foretold by the ancient Prophets.

1. *Nineveh* was the antient Seat of the *Assyrian* Monarchs, who captivated the ten Tribes; so large, that the passing through it took up three Days Journey (a). “ There is nothing of it now (b) to “ be seen but Hillocks, which the People of that “ Country say are its Foundations;” according to the Prophecy of *Nabum* against it (c), *With an overflowing flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof.*

2. That once famous City of *Babylon* in *Chaldea*, which was esteemed the Wonder of the World; whose Walls, being of a prodigious Height, are said to be in Compass 480 Furlongs, or 60 of our *English* Miles; which the great Monarch *Nebuchadnezzar* made his Seat, and because he much enlarged it, boasted, *Is not this great Babylon which I have built?* (who also carried away captive the *Jews*) although it may be known where it stood, by its Situation, and several ancient and delicate Antiquities, which are still standing thereabout in great Desolation; is (d) now, “ with its Magnificence and glorious Buildings, quite desolated, “ and lieth in the Dust: There is not so much as “ a House to be seen; and it appears as if one “ were in the middle of a Desert; so that every “ one who passes through it, hath great Reason “ to admire with Astonishment how it is now reduced to such a Desolation and Wilderness;

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“ that

(a) *Jonah* iii. 10.

(b) Thevenot's Travels, Part II. Book I. Ch. 11.

(c) Chap. i. 8.

(d) Rauwolf's apud Ray's Collection of Travels, Tom. I. Part II. Ch. 7. p. 175, 178.

“ that the very Shepherds cannot abide to fix their  
 “ tents to inhabit it.” So strictly are the Prophecies verified which we read (a), *And Babylon the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah; it shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation; neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there, neither shall the shepherds make their folds there.* The Prophet adds (b), *Wild beasts of the desert shall live there;* and so St. Jerom tells us, that in his Time (about the Year 400) it was *the King's Hunting-Place* (c); and Benjamin, in his *Itinerary*, says of the Ruins of Nebuchadnezzar's Palace there, that *Men dare not enter in for Serpents and Scorpions which possess the Place* (d).

3 Tyre, a wealthy City, and of great Trading for Merchandize, and as such mentioned by *Isaiab* (e), *Whose merchants were princes, and honourable in the earth* (f), is now a “ mere (g) Babel of broken  
 “ Walls, Pillars, and Vaults, there being not so  
 “ much as one entire House left. Its present In-  
 “ habitants are only a few poor Wretches, har-  
 “ bouring themselves in the Vaults, and subsisting  
 “ chiefly upon Fishing; who seem to be preserved  
 “ in this Place, by a Divine Providence, as a  
 “ visible Argument how God has fulfilled his  
 “ Word concerning Tyre; viz. *I will make thee*  
 “ *like the top of a rock, thou shalt be a place to*  
 “ *spread nets upon* (h).

12. Upon

(a) *Isaiab* xlii. 19, &c.

(b) *Ver.* 21. (c) *In Isaiab* xlii. ult.

(d) Benjamin Itiner. p. (mihi) 134. Edit. Leyd. 1633. See also *Jer.* li. 26, to 30.

(e) *Isaiab* xxiii. 8.

(f) *Ver.* 8.

(g) Maundrell March 20. p. 48.

(h) *Ezek.* xxvi. 14.



12. Upon Mount *Calvary*, there (a) is “ a  
 “ Hole in the natural Rock, said to be the very  
 “ same in which the Foot of our Lord’s Cross was  
 “ fixed : At about a Yard and a half distant from  
 “ the Hole is seen that memorable Cleft in the  
 “ Rock, said to have been made by the Earth-  
 “ quake which happened at the Suffering of the  
 “ God of Nature ; when (as St. *Matthew* (b)  
 “ witnesseth) *the rocks rent*. This Cleft, as to  
 “ what now appears of it, is a Span wide, at its  
 “ upper Part, and two deep ; after which it closes,  
 “ but it opens again below, and runs down to an  
 “ unknown Depth in the Earth. That this Rent  
 “ was made by the Earthquake, there is only  
 “ Tradition to prove ; but that it is a natural and  
 “ genuine Breach, and not counterfeited by any  
 “ Art, the Sense and Reason of every one that  
 “ sees it may convince him ; for the Sides of it  
 “ fit like two Tallies to each other, and yet it  
 “ runs into such intricate Windings, as could not  
 “ be well counterfeited by Art, nor arrived at by  
 “ any Instrument.”

13. In the Countries (c) near *Mesopotamia*,  
 “ The Women make Dough for Cakes, which  
 “ are about a Finger thick, and about the Big-  
 “ ness of a Trencher, and lay them on hot Stones,  
 “ and keep them turning ; at length they fling  
 “ Ashes and Embers over them, and so bake  
 “ them thoroughly. They are very good to eat,  
 “ and very savoury.” This seems to explain  
 ( *Sarah*’s making Cakes on the Hearth (d).

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14. “ We

(a) Maundrell March 20. p. 48.

(b) xxvii. 51.

(c) Rauwolff apud Ray’s Collection of Travels, Tom. I. Part II. Chap. 9. p. 201.

(d) *Gen.* xviii. 6. likewise *Exod.* xii. 39. 1 *Kings* xvii. 13. and xix. 6, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 8. *Hosea* vii. 8.

14. "We were sufficiently instructed by Experience (a), what the *Psalmist* means by *the Dew of Hermon*: Our Tents being as wet with it as if it had rained all Night." This was spoken of that *Hermon* near *Tabor*.

15. "The Water (b) of the Sea of *Galilee* (which is also called the *Sea of Tiberias*, or the *Lake of Genezareth*) hath Plenty of Fish in it; on what Side soever I cast my Eye along the Shore, I saw a Fish swim." So it seems it was in Christ's Time. Hence we read of *Simon Peter*, and others, casting their Nets, and fishing in the Sea of *Galilee* or *Tiberias* (c). To the same Purpose *Josephus*, a Jew, wrote concerning the Lake of *Genezareth*, that it had in it great Variety of Fish, which for Taste and Shape were not to be found any where else (d).

16. The Rite of *Discalceation*, or putting (e) off the Shoes or Sandals, is still used by the Eastern People at their coming into sacred Places (like putting off the Hat with us). So do the Jews now, when they enter into their Synagogues (and the Turks at their Mosques or Temples). As it was commanded *Moses* (f), Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the Place whereon thou standest is holy ground.

17. The ancient Custom still continues in the Eastern Parts, of employing *Eunuchs* (g), or gelded Men, in the chiefest Offices, as of Treasurers, Stewards over their Goods, Cattle, Wives, and Children, &c. Thus Queen *Candace's* Officer  
of

(a) Maundrell ibid. March 22.

(b) Le Bruyn's Voyage, Chap. 61.

(c) Matt. iv. and John xxi.

(d) Josephus's Wars, Book III. Chap. 18.

(e) Thevenot's Travels, Part I. Chap. 27. Mede, Book. II.

(f) Exod. iii. 5.

(g) Of the Reverence of God's House, §. 3.

of great Authority, and chief Treasurer, was an Eunuch (a).

18. The Way of Divination by Arrows was usual among the ancient *Arabians* (b); as when any Person was to undertake an Affair of Moment, he put three Arrows into a Vessel, on one of which was written, *My God hath commanded*; on the other, *My God hath forbidden*; and on the third, not *any thing*. If the first were drawn out, the Person pursued his Design; if the second, he forbore; and if the third, he drew on till one of the former was drawn. This may explain the Way of the King of *Babylon's* Divination, when among other Methods thereof, it is said, *He made his arrows bright* (c).

19. When the *Turks* salute one another, they uncover not the Head (to do so would be an Affront;) but only laying their Hand upon their Breast, and bowing a little, *Sela meon aleicom* (d), which is as much as to say, *Peace be with you*. This was the ancient Way of Salutation. And the *East-Indians* (e), when they salute each other, uncover not the Head, but often *throw themselves flat on their faces, at each other's feet*. Thus in Scripture, they saluted, by *bowing*, and sometimes *to the Ground*, to shew the greater Respect (f), and wished each other *Peace* (as hath been observed in the first General Rule for the Interpreting holy

Z 3

Scripture,

(a) *Acts* viii. 27. See what is said of that Passage in *Acts* viii.

(b) Pocock's Specimen Hist. Arab. p. 327. &c. & Hieronymus in *Ezek.* xxi. 21. (c) *Ezek.* xxi. 21.

(d) Thevenot's Travel's, Part. I. Book I. Chap. 22.

(e) Dampier's second Vol. of his Voyages, Chap. 7. and Vol. I. Chap. 4. Edit. 4. A Mosquito Indian seeing his Brother, a Mosquito Man, threw himself flat on his Face at his Feet, who helping him up, and embracing him, fell flat with his Face on the Ground at the other's Feet, and was by him taken up also.

(f) *Gen.* xxxiii. 3, 6, 7.



Scripture, *Numb. vii*) : And not in Civil, but Religious Worship, the Eastern People used *Prostration*, or falling down flat on their Faces oft-times when they said their Prayers, as the *Mahometans* do. This explains the Words (*a*), *I fell down before the Lord* (*b*) ; and *Christ fell on his face and prayed* (*c*).

20. “ The Religion of the Inhabitants of *Tonquin* (*d*), in the *East-Indies*, is *Paganism* ; and “ they are great Idolaters : Nevertheless they own “ *an Omnipotent, Supreme, Over-ruling Power,* “ which beholds both them and their Actions ; “ and so far takes notice of them, as to reward “ the Good, and punish the Bad, to the other “ World.” This farther confirms what hath been said in the Seventh General Remark on the *Pentateuch*, concerning the Idolatry of the heathen World.

21. In the *East-Indies*, and in *Africa*, Men purchase (*e*) their Wives of their Fathers, or nearest Male Relations ; according to the Ninth General Remark on the *Pentateuch*.

22. “ There are Store of *Ostriches* (*f*) in the “ Desarts of *Arabia*. These are the simplest of “ Fowls, and Symbols of Folly : When they have “ laid their Eggs, they leave them, and unmind- “ ful where, sit on those they meet with.” This explains the Words of *Job* (*g*), where it is said of the Ostrich, *which leaveth her eggs in the earth, and warmeth them in the dust, and forgetteth that the foot may crush them : she is hardened against her young ones, as though they were not hers ; because*  
God

(*a*) *Deut ix. 18.*      (*b*) *So Job i. 20. Dan. iii. 7. Matt. ii. 11.*      (*c*) *Matt xxvi. 39.*

(*d*) *Dampier's Voyages, Vol. II. Chap. 3.*

(*e*) *Dampier, ibid. Vol. II. Chap. 3. and near the End of the second Vol. of Natal in Africk.*

(*f*) *Sandy's Travels, Book II. of the Arabians near the End, p. 139.*

(*g*) *xxxix. 14, &c.*

*God hath deprived her of wisdom, &c.* Hence some have fancied, that the Ostrich is hatched only by the hot Sand ; whereas, however the Eggs are *left* and *warmed* therein, and are *forgotten* by the proper Female ; yet they are hatched by Incubation, or sitting on them (as Mr. Sandys found) though not always by the same Female who laid them, she often *forgetting* where they are ; and if they are not sat on by one or other Hen Ostrich, they are spoiled, instead of hatched (a) by the Sun or Sand.

23. There are divers Opinions and Doctrines observed by Travellers to be amongst the *modern Jews*, agreeable to those of their Fore-Fathers ; which confirm and explain some Passages of the New Testament. As,

1<sup>st</sup>, That of their continued Expectancy of a Triumphant Messiah (b), whose *Appearance they believe shall be warlike, and that he shall lead all their Enemies captive, and triumph in the Spoils of Esau* (i. e. all the Gentile World). They imagine there shall be a general Surrender of the Edomites (that is, Gentiles) who shall submit themselves to his Rod : When all Edom, that is, all Mankind who are not of their Religion, shall become their Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water. This was the common Notion amongst them in our Saviour's Time ; who in Opposition thereto declared, that his Kingdom was not of this World. However, this Mistake of theirs occasioned their being offended at him, and not owning him for the true Messiah, as hath been observed in the *Second General Remark* on the *holy Gospels*.

2<sup>dly</sup>, *There are none to be met with among them*

Z 4

(the

(a) Sandys, *ibid.* Compare Bochart de Animal. apud Pool's Synopsis in Job xxxix 14, 15, 16.

(b) Dean Addison's Present State of the Jews, Chap. 1.

xiv REMARKS on Palestine, &c.

(the Jews) who adhere to the Old Bible without Talmud Traditions (a). In this they imitate their Fore-fathers, whom Christ reproves for their Traditions (b).

3dly, Though the Bible be not denied the People's Reading among the Jews, yet the giving the Sense thereof belongs only to the Masters or Rabbies; In (c) whose Interpretation of the Text, the Vulgar, upon Pain of Excommunication, are bound to acquiesce. And so their present Masters usurp the Authority over their Faith, as their old Rabbies were wont to do in Christ's Time; who charged his Followers not to be called Rabbi, Father, or Master (d).

4thly, All Hope and Promise of future Reward is confined to themselves (the Jews); and to those who are not of their Religion, they allow nothing but a total Perdition of their Being (e). Thus in the first publishing the Gospel, the converted Jews, and even the Apostles themselves at first, could not believe that God should grant to the Gentiles Repentance unto Salvation (f).

5thly, The modern Jews take special Care, that they neither touch Bread, or any thing which is eatable, a Book, or any holy Thing, before they wash their Hands and Feet (g). So that they still continue to observe the Traditions, which Christ rebuked them for (h).

(a) Idem ibid.

(b) Matt. xv. For which see the Third General Remark on the holy Gospels.

(c) Dean Addison's present State of the Jews, Ch. 2.

(d) Matt. xxiii. See the Tenth General Remark on the Gospels, Num. I.

(e) Addison's State, &c. Chap. 3.

(f) See above on the Acts of the Apostles.

(g) Leo Modena, Part I. Ch. 7.

(h) See the Third General Remark on the Holy Gospels.







A  
CHRONOLOGICAL  
TABLE

According to

*Archbishop USHER's Annals, and the Epitome thereof in the Index of our larger English Bibles, and Mr. ECHARD's Tables; wherein the Computation is according to the Vulgar Æra (or Account) which commences Anno Mundi 4004.*

- 1656  E Flood, sixteen hundred and fifty-six Years after the Beginning of the World.
- 1771  The *Assyrian* Monarchy founded by *Nimrod*.
- 2083 *Abraham's* Call and Journey to *Canaan*, from his own Country *Mesopotamia*; four hundred twenty-seven Years after the Flood.
- 2298 *Jacob* with his Family, goes down into *Egypt*; where they and their Posterity lived comfortably one hundred twenty-one Years.
- 2427 The Beginning of the Bondage of the *Israelites* in *Egypt*.

2533 The

- 2513 The *Israelites* delivered out of the *Egyptian* Bondage and Slavery, after their being under it fourscore and six Years, and two hundred and fifteen Years after *Jacob's* going down into *Egypt*.
- 2553 They go over *Jordan* into the Promised Land of *Canaan*, forty Years after their Deliverance out of *Egypt*.
- 2599 The Judges, who continued a little above three hundred Years.
- 2909 The Kings, of which the first was *Saul*, then *David*, and next *Solomon*.
- 3000 The Temple of *Solomon*, or the first Temple finished (after he had been seven Years in building it) four hundred forty-seven Years after their Entrance into *Canaan*, and one thousand and five Years before Christ.
- 3029 The Division of the Kingdom into *Judah* and *Israel*, four hundred seventy-six Years after their Entrance into *Canaan*.

*Affairs of the Assyrians.**Affairs of Israel and Judah.*

- 3257 A Conspiracy being entered into against *Sardanapalus*, the last of the old *Assyrian* Monarchs, the Monarchy is divided between *Arbaces* (called *Tiglathpileser*, 2 *Kings* xv. 29.) who resided at *Nineveh*, and was esteemed King of *Assyria*; and *Belshis* (called *Baladan*, 2 *Kings* xx. 12.) who resided at *Babylon*, and was King thereof, and of the Country round about,

3328 The

# A Chronological TABLE.

xvii

*Affairs of the Assyrians.*

*Affairs of Israel and Judah.*

about, called *Babylonia*, or *Chaldea*.

3276 *Salmanezzer* succeeds *Tiglathpilezer*, as King of *Assyria*, and resides at *Nineveh*.

3289 *Sennacherib* succeeds *Salmanezzer* as King of *Assyria*, and resides at *Nineveh*.

3294 *Esharhaddon* succeeds in the Kingdom of *Assyria*.

3323 He reunites *Babylon* in *Chaldea* (which had been seized on by *Belshazzar*, and his Successors) to the *Assyrian* Monarchy.

3378 *Nabopolassar* being a *Babylonian*, and Commander under the King of *Assyria* and *Chaldea*, with some Aid, assaults and overthrows *Nineveh*, the ancient Royal Seat (according to the Prophecy of *Nabum*) and makes himself King of *Babylon* in *Chaldea*, and also Chief of the *Assyrian* Monarchy. So he is termed *King of Assyria*, 2 Kings xxii. 29.

3394 *Pha-*

3283 The Captivity of the Kingdom of *Israel* by *Salmanezzer* King of *Assyria*, seven hundred and thirty Years after their Entrance into *Canaan*, and two hundred fifty-four Years after the Division.

3394 *Jo-*



## Affairs of Babylon.

## Affairs of Judah.

- 3394 *Pharaoh Necho*, King of *Egypt*, marches with a great Army towards *Euphrates*, in order to give a Check to the *Babylonians*.

*Necho* succeeds in his Expedition against the *Babylonians* near *Euphrates*; and makes all *Syria*, with the Country of the *Jews*, subject to him.

- 3397 *Nabopolassar* King of *Babylon* and *Assyria*, about a Year before his Death, takes his Son *Nebuchadnezzar* Partner in his Kingdom, and sends him with an Army first against the *Egyptians* at *Euphrates*, whom he subdued; and then against the *Jews*, who had become subject to *Necho*, on his Success against the *Babylonians*.

- 3394 *Josiah* King of *Judah*, designing to stop *Necho* King of *Egypt* in his March against the *Babylonians*, is slain at *Megiddo*; and *Jehoahaz* his Son, whom the People had made King, is deposed by *Necho* on his Return home-wards: Who sets up *Eliakim*, another Son of *Josiah*, in his Stead, and changes his Name to *Jehoia-kim*, 2 *Kings* xxiii. 30, &c. but carries *Jehoahaz* into *Egypt*, where he died.

- 3397 The Time approaching for the Destruction and Captivity of the Kingdom of *Judah*, God sends *Jeremiah* the Prophet to forewarn them of it, and, if possible, to reclaim them, *Jer.* xxv. 8, &c. but all in vain.

3398 *Ne-*

3398 *Je-*

# A Chronological TABLE.

xix

## Affairs of Babylon.

- 3398 *Nebuchadnezzar* marches against *Jerusalem*, and makes it subject to him, and orders many Youths of the best Quality to be sent away to *Babylon*. *Dan. i. 3.* together with great Treasures out of the King's Palace and the Temple.
- 3404 *Nebuchadnezzar* being (on Notice of the Death of his Father) returned to *Babylon*, sends another Army against *Jehoiakim K. of Judah*, who had rebelled against him. *Jehoiakim* is slain, and the Kingdom laid waste, and his Son *Jehoiachin* made King.
- 3405 *Nebuchadnezzar* comes again against *Jerusalem*, takes King *Jehoiachin* and many others Captive, and sends them to *Babylon*, and makes *Zedekiah* King of *Judah*.
- 3416 Upon *Zedekiah's* Revolt, *Nebuchadnezzar* comes once more against *Jerusalem*, and takes it, puts out *Zedekiah's* Eyes, and

## Affairs of Judah.

- 3398 *Jehoiakim* is become tributary to the *Babylonians*; and the Captivity of the Kingdom of *Judah* is begun by *Nebuchadnezzar* King of *Babylon*. From whence the Seventy Years of their Captivity are reckoned; one hundred fifteen Years after the Destruction of the Kingdom of *Israel* by *Salmanezzer*. *Daniel*, being carried among the Captives, was preferred in *Nebuchadnezzar's* Court, for interpreting his Dream.
- 3416 *Jerusalem* and the first Temple burnt, and the *Babylonian* Captivity finished (in 18 Years from the Beginning of it) eight hundred

## A Chronological TABLE.

*Affairs of Babylon.*

and carries him and many others captive to *Babylon*.

*Affairs of Judah.*

hundred sixty-three Years after their Entrance into *Canaan*, four hundred sixteen Years after the Temple had been built, and five hundred eighty-eight Years before Christ.

*Affairs of Babylon.**Affairs of the Jews.*

- 3435 *Nebuchadnezzar* for his Pride is distracted, and driven among Beasts.
- 3442 After seven Years he recovers, acknowledges the divine Power, and is restored to his Kingdom; but soon after dies.
- 3442 *Evil-Merodach*, his Son, succeeds in the Kingdom.
- 3444 *Neriglissar*, *Evilmerodach*'s Sister's Husband, slays him, and succeeds. This *Neriglissar*, being jealous of the united Forces of the *Medes* and *Persians*, designed a War against them; which, about twenty Years after he began it, ended with the Ruin of the *Babylonian* Monarchy, and occasioned the Return of the *Jews* from the *Babylonian* Captivity.
- 3445 *Cyrus*, Son of *Cambyfes*, King of *Persia*, and Nephew to *Cyaxares*, King of *Media*, is chosen General of the Army of the *Medes* and *Persians*; by whom *Neriglissar*, King of *Babylon*, is slain in Battle: and his Son
- 3448 *La-*
- The *Jews* remain Captives in *Babylon*.
- Jehoiachin*, or *Jekoniah*, being a Captive in *Babylon*, has Favour shewn him after 37 Years Imprisonment there, *Jer. lii. 31, &c.*

*Daniel*



# A Chronological TABLE. xxi

## Affairs of Babylon.

## Affairs of the Jews.

3448 *Laborsoarchad* (who was also grandson to *Nebuchadnezzar*, on his Daughter's Side) succeeds: He is slain by some of his own People.

3449 *Nabonidus*, called in Scripture *Belshazzar*, Son of *Evilmerodach* (and so another Grandson to *Nebuchadnezzar*, on his Son's Side; in which respect *Nebuchadnezzar*, according to the Scripture-Style, is called his *Father*; that is, Ancestor, *Dan.* v.2.) succeeds in the Kingdom of *Babylon*, and was the last King thereof.

3465 *Cyrus*, having routed the *Babylonian* Army, besieges the City of *Babylon*.

3466 *Belshazzar's* Feast, and the Hand-writing on the Wall, denouncing the End of his Reign, and his Kingdom being given to the *Medes* and *Persians*.

*Belshazzar* is slain. With him ended the Monarchy of the *Affyrians* or *Chaldeans*; and *Cyrus* having taken the City of *Babylon*, founded the *Persian* Monarchy; but for the present left the Government to his Uncle *Cyaxares*, who was King of *Media*, and called in Scripture

*Darius the Median*, *Dan.* v. 31. Hence the Government was stiled that of the *Medes* and *Persians*.

*Daniel* is preferred in *Belshazzar's* Court, *Dan.* v.

*Darius's* Decree against making any Petition for 30 Days, but to himself, occasions *Daniel's* being cast into the Lion's Den, *Dan.* vi.

*Affairs of Babylon.**Affairs of the Jews.*

3467 ———

*Darius the Median* governed the Affairs of the Empire of *Babylon* for two Years, and then died.

*Daniel* having considered the seventy Years Captivity (foretold by *Jeremiah*, Chap. xxix. 10.) as now expiring, prays for the Deliverance of the People. God sends the Angel *Gabriel* to confirm his Hopes, and also to foretel to him the *Messiah*, the spiritual Redeemer of his Church, after seventy Weeks of Years, or seventy Times seven; that is four hundred and ninety Years, *Dan.* ix.

*Note*, That from *Cyrus's* extinguishing the *Babylonian* Monarchy, and beginning the *Persian*, the *Jews*, in their own Country, were governed by the High-Priest and Sanhedrin, or great Council; but under Subjection to the *Persian* Monarchy, for about two hundred and eight Years, till *Alexander's* Conquest of the *Persians*.

*Affairs of the Persians.**Affairs of the Jews.*

3468 *Cyrus* had now the Possession of the whole *Eastern* Empire, by the Death of his Father *Cambyses* King of *Persia*, and his Uncle *Darius* King of *Media*: and so he became the first *Persian* Monarch, himself dying seven Years afterwards.

The Seventy Years Captivity are expired: And

*Cyrus* releases the *Jews*, five hundred thirty-six Years before Christ. The *Jews* set up the *Altar* for the offering of their Sacrifices to God; and lay the Foundation of the *Second Temple*, in the second Year after their Return, *Ezra* iii.

3459.

3475 *Cam-*

3470 But

# A Chronological TABLE. xxiii

## Affairs of the Persians.

## Affairs of the Jews.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p>3475 <i>Cambyfes the Second</i>, his eldeſt Son ſucceeds ; but by his extravagant Behaviour, gave an Opportunity to one of the</p> <p>3482 <i>Persian Magi</i> (or <i>Smerdis</i>) called <i>Artaxerxes</i> in <i>Ezr.</i> iv. 7, 16. to uſurp the Government : Againſt whom ſeven of the <i>Persian</i> Princes conſpire, and ſlew him ; and hearing that <i>Cambyfes</i> alſo was dead, they ſet up</p> <p>3483 <i>Darius</i>, one of their Number, ſurnamed <i>Hyaſtapes</i> ( becauſe one <i>Hyaſtapes</i> was his Father) to ſucceed in the Government.</p> | <p>3470 But the <i>Samaritans</i>, being not accepted as Helpers in the Building, maliciously bribed ſome of <i>Cyrus's</i> Courtiers, and hindered it all his Reign, <i>Ezra</i> iv. 5.</p> <p>3475 <i>Cambyfes</i> the Second is ſuppoſed to be that <i>Ahaſuerus</i>, in <i>Ezra</i> iv. 6. whom the <i>Samaritans</i> ſollicitated to diſcourage the Rebuilding of the Temple at <i>Jeruſalem</i>.</p> <p>3483 <i>Artaxerxes</i> alſo forbade the <i>Jews</i> to build, on the ſpiteful Suggestions of the <i>Samaritans</i>, <i>Ezra</i> iv. 7, 16.</p> <p>3484 Under <i>Darius</i>, in his ſecond Year, by the Incitement of the Prophets <i>Haggai</i> and <i>Zechariah</i>, the Building of the Temple goes on, <i>Ezra</i> v. 6.</p> <p>— The Second Temple finiſhed in the ſixth Year of <i>Darius</i>, and dedicated with great Joy, <i>Ezr.</i> vi. about 20 Years after the Foundation thereof was laid under <i>Cyrus</i>,</p> |
|---|--|



rus, and five hundred fifteen Years before Christ.

3519 *Xerxes* succeeds his Father *Darius*, as likewise the following *Persian* Kings were each of them the Sons of their Parents, who reigned before them, except the last mentioned, who was of the Royal Seed, though not by immediate Descent.

3531 *Artaxerxes* succeeds, surnamed *Longimanus*, by reason of the Length of his Hands. He was very favourable to the *Jews*; and is supposed to be that *Ahasuerus* who married *Esther*, by whom the *Jews* were preserved from the Destruction contrived by *Haman*, *Esth.* ii. &c.

3537 *Ezra* a Priest, and learned in the Law of *Moses*, obtains a Commission from *Artaxerxes* to set in Order the Commonwealth of the *Jews*, and to reform the Church at *Jerusalem*, *Ezr.* vii. sixty-nine Years after their Return from Captivity.

3550 *Nehemiah* also, a religious *Jew*, but preferred to be Cup-bearer to *Artaxerxes*, procures a Commission from him, to finish the building of the Walls of *Jerusalem*, and farther

3581 *Da-*

# A Chronological TABLE. XXV

## *Affairs of the Persians.*

3581 *Darius Nothus*, whose proper Name was *Ochus*, succeeds in the Empire.

3600 *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, so called by reason of his great Memory.

3644 *Ochus*, called also *Artaxerxes*.

3666 *Arogs*, or *Arfes*.

3668 *Darius*, whose right Name was *Codomanus*, who was afterwards conquered by *Alexander the Great*.

3674 *Alexander the Great*, having conquered the *Persians*, founded the *Macedonian* or *Grecian* Empire.

## *Affairs of the Jews.*

farther to reform and settle the *Jewish* Church and State; fourscore and two Years after the Return from the *Babylonian* Captivity, *Nehem. i*, &c.

3672 The *Jews* in Subjection to *Alexander the Great*, whilst he was in those Parts of the World, pursuing his Conquest of the *Persians*, two hundred and four Years after their Return from the *Babylonian* Captivity, into their own Country; and three hundred thirty-two Years before Christ.

*Affairs of the Persians.*

- 3681 *Alexander the Great* died at *Babylon*, seven Years after his Conquest over the *Persians*.

*Affairs of the Egyptians and Syrians.*

- 3684 After *Alexander's* Death, his Generals seizing on the several Parts of his Empire, *Ptolemy Soter*, who had gotten *Egypt*, made himself Master of *Judea*.
- 3806 *Antiochus the Great*, King of *Syria*, prevailing in his Wars against the *Egyptians*, the *Jews* surrendered themselves to him.

- 3834 They are grievously oppressed by *Antiochus Epiphanes*, King of *Syria*; three hundred and sixty-six Years after their Return from the *Babylonian* Captivity; and one hundred and seventy Years before Christ.

*Affairs of the Jews.*

*Gerizzim* in *Samaria*, with *Alexander's* Leave, according to *Usher*, occasioned a great Schism in the *Jewish* Church. [But Dean *Prideaux* places it above seventy Years before this, under *Darius* *Nothus*.]

*Affairs of the Jews.*

- 3684 The *Jews* in Subjection to the Kings of *Egypt*, about three hundred and twenty Years before Christ.
- 3806 The *Jews*, one hundred and twenty Years afterwards, become subject to the *Syrians*.

3838 The



# *A Chronological T A B L E.*    xxvii

3838 The *Maccabees* (descended from one of their Priestly Families) their Deliverers; one hundred and sixty-six Years before Christ.

[*Note*, That they were governed by the same Family of the *Maccabees* successively, till their Subjection to the *Romans*.]

3941 The *Jews* brought under Subjection to the *Romans* by *Pompey*, one of the *Roman* Generals (after having been governed by their own Countrymen, the *Maccabees*, somewhat above one hundred Years) sixty-three Years before Christ.

3964 *Herod the Great* (an *Idumean*, but of the *Jewish* Religion) declared by the *Romans*, the King of the *Jews*, forty Years before the Birth of Christ.

3966 *Herod*, about two or three Years after he was declared King of *Judea*, with the Assistance of *Socius*, the *Roman* General, besieged and took *Jerusalem* with a very great Slaughter of the *Jews*; and *Antigonus*, the last reigning Prince of the *Maccabees*, being beheaded, *Herod* became fully established in the Kingdom of *Judea*.

3996 The Temple of *Jerusalem*, having been much decayed, was, in nine Years and a half, repaired, or rather rebuilt by *Herod*, and finished eight Years before Christ.

4000 } *Jesus Christ* our Lord born in the World.  
4004 }

*Herod the Great* died about a Year and a Quarter after Christ's Nativity. His Dominions were divided among three of his Sons: Of which *Archelaus* had *Judea* and *Samaria*; and *Herod Antipas*, *Galilee*; *Philip* had *Trachonitis*, and other Countries beyond *Jordan*, Northward.

xxviii *A Chronological TABLE.*

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea and Samaria.	Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
<i>Augustus.</i> 40		<i>Archelaus</i> governed <i>Judea and Samaria.</i>	<i>Herod Antipas</i> governed <i>Galilee</i> ; and continued in that Station till some time after Christ's Death: He is called in Scripture <i>Herod the Tetrarch,</i> <i>Matthew</i> xiv. i. but most commonly <i>Herod.</i>	
	6	<i>Archelaus</i> is banished; and his Dominions being made a Province subject to that of <i>Syria</i> ; Governors are sent by the Romans into <i>Judea.</i> The fifth of which was		
<i>Tiberius.</i>	12 14 26 28	<i>Pontius Pilate.</i>		Our Lord at 12 Years of Age at <i>Jerusalem</i> among the Doctors. <i>Joseph</i> , Husband to the Virgin <i>Mary</i> , dies. <i>John Baptist</i> begins to preach. This Period <i>St. Mark</i> calls, <i>The Beginning of the Gospel.</i>
	29			Our

# *A Chronological TABLE.*      **XXIX**

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea and Samaria.	Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
<i>Tiberius.</i>	30			Our Lord is baptized, and enters upon his publick Ministry, and works Miracles in <i>Galilee</i> ; and at the first Passover after his Baptism goes to <i>Jerusalem</i> , and also into other Parts of <i>Judea</i> and <i>Samaria</i> .
	31			<i>Christ's</i> second Passover after his Baptism. He more and more manifests himself by preaching, and working Miracles.
	32			<i>Christ's</i> third Passover after his Baptism.
	33			<i>John Baptist</i> beheaded.
				<i>Christ's</i> fourth and last Passover. He is crucified, arises again, and ascends up into Heaven.
				The <i>Holy Ghost</i> is sent down.
	34			The first Establishment of the Christian Church.
				<i>St. Stephen</i> stoned, and the Church persecuted.
	35	<i>Pilate</i>		<i>St. Paul</i> converted as he was going to <i>Damascus</i> .
	36	deprived		
<i>Caligula.</i>	37	of his Government,		



## A Chronological TABLE.

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea and Samaria.	Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
		and Marcellus in his room.		
	38		Herod Antipas, or the Tetrarch, is banished : His Government is bestowed on Herod Agrippa, a Grandson of Herod the Great.	
		Judea. Samaria. Gal.		
Claudius.	40			The Gentiles
	41	Herod Agrippa is confirmed in his Government of Galilee by the Emperor Claudius, who also added Judea and Samaria to his Kingdom ; so he is called Herod the King, Acts xii. as being now King of all Palestine, or the Jewish Country.		owned to have an Interest in Christ, in a Vision to Peter. Cornelius converted.
	44	Herod Agrippa is smitten by an Angel, and dies miserably ; upon which the Roman Emperor again sends Governors in-		Herod Agrippa persecutes the Church. St. James the Great beheaded by his Command : but Peter delivered.

# *A Chronological TABLE.*      XXX;

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea, Samaria, Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
		to Judea, Samaria, and Galilee.	
		Cuspius Fadus, Governor.	The Persecution ceases, and the Christian Church flourishes.
	45		The Apostles disperse themselves to preach the Gospel in several Parts of the World.
	46	Tiberius Alexander, Governor.	Paul and Barnabas being chosen, at Antioch in Syria, the Apostles of the Gentiles, begin their Circuit, and preach at Cyprus, and in the Lesser Asia.
	47		They return to Antioch, and give an Account of their Success.
	48	Cumanus, Governor.	
	49		They go to Jerusalem to the Council.
	51		
	53	Faelix, Governor.	Paul, being separated from Barnabas, travels into Europe, and plants the Gospel in Greece, chiefly at Thessalonica and Corinth.
		Agrippa the Younger, Son to Herod Agrippa abovementioned, obtains the Dominions formerly belonging to Philip, and other Countries lying North-Eastward of Galilee and Jordan. To	

St.

# xxxii     *A Chronological TABLE.*

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea, Samaria, and Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
		which afterwards was added some Part of Galilee. He is called <i>King Agrippa</i> , <i>Acts xxv.</i>	
<i>Nero.</i>	54		St. Paul settles a Church at <i>Ephesus</i> .
	58		He goes the last time to <i>Jerusalem</i> , and is arraigned before <i>Fælix</i> , who detained him Prisoner two Years at <i>Cæsarea</i> , the Residence of the Roman Governors.
	60	<i>Festus</i> , Governor.	St. Paul before <i>Festus</i> and King <i>Agrippa</i> at <i>Cæsarea</i> .
		<i>Judea and Samaria.</i>   <i>Galilee.</i>	
	61	<i>Albinus</i> , Governor.	St. Paul's first Imprisonment at <i>Rome</i> .
	62		[Here ends the History of the Acts of the Apostles.]
	63		St. Paul is released, and travels up and down planting the Gospel in the Western Parts.
	64	<i>Florus</i> , Governor.	
	66	The Jewish War,	The first general Persecution under <i>Nero</i> breaks out.



# *A Chronological TABLE.* xxxiii

Roman Emperors.	Years of Christ.	Judea and Samaria	Galilee.	Affairs of Christianity.
		which at length proved their Ruin		
	67			St. Paul at his second Coming to Rome is apprehended with St. Peter.
Galba.	68			St. Peter and St. Paul both martyred at Rome.
Otho.	69			
Vitellius				
Vespasian.	70			The daily Sacrifice ceases. Jerusalem is taken, and burnt by the Roman Army, whereby an End is put to the Jewish State, a little above fifteen hundred Years after their first Settlement in Canaan, six hundred and two Years after their Return from the Babylonian Captivity, and thirty-seven Years after Christ's Crucifixion.

xxxiv      *A Chronological TABLE.*

*It may be proper, for the Use of some Readers, to signify the State and Office, in the Christian Church, of the few Primitive Fathers herein quoted, and the Time when they flourished; and for the Ease of others, the Editions made use of.*

*Years of  
Christ.*

100	<i>Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch in Syria. Englished by Archbishop Wake. Compared with the Greek of Vossius. Edit. II. London, 1680.</i>
140	<i>Justin Martyr, a Christian Apologist. Apol. I. Grabe. Oxon. 1700. Trypho. Jebb. Lond. 1719.</i>
179	<i>Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons in France. By Grabe. Oxon 1702. 7 DE 65</i>
192	<i>Tertullian, Presbyter at Carthage in Africa. Rigaltii, Paris 1634.</i>
398	<i>Chrysostom, Bishop of Constantinople. Latin. Antwerp 1614. compared with the Savilian Edition.</i>
400	<i>Jerom, Presbyter. Much conversant in Palestine, or in the Holy Land. Erasmus. Paris 1534,</i>
400	<i>Augustin, Bishop of Hippo in Africa. Basil. 1543.</i>

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